The Black Cat

Seven Complete Stories

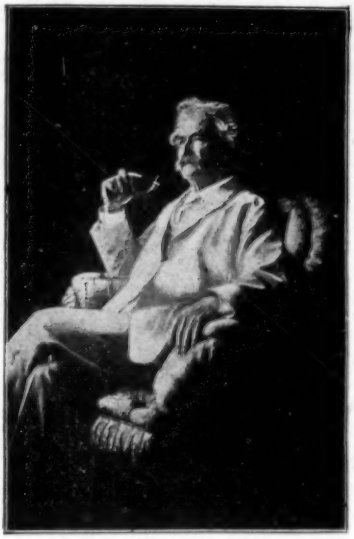
Outside the Beaten Paths of Fiction

10 Cents **JULY 1913** $1.00 a Year

THE SHORTSTORY PUBLISHING CO., Loring Avenue, Salem, Massachusetts
322 Regent Street, London, W., England

PRINT IN BINDING

"Your Mark Twain"



Copyright 1907 by Underwood & Underwood

He is "My Mark Twain" to almost everybody. His irresistible humor has charmed more people than the lines of any other American. HUMOR and PHILOSOPHY he is mainly noted for — but his PATHOS is sublime — his SARCASM so just as to make you happy that he lived.

He can be "YOUR MARK TWAIN" *in reality*. The AUTHOR'S NATIONAL EDITION makes this possible. It is an edition containing his collected writings in 25 volumes, and costs $1.00 PER VOLUME. YOU PAY $2.00 MONTHLY. The set comprises the same text, word for word, as the most expensive edition. The books are printed from clear type on good paper and serviceably bound in red crepe cloth. The titles are in gilt. The shelf-backs have a decorative design and on the cover of each volume is a medallion of the great author. The volumes have headbands. The AUTHOR'S NATIONAL EDITION contains seventy-five illustrations by such artists as J. G. Brown, Dan Beard, F. Luis Mora, Peter Newell, etc., etc. TO GET THIS EDITION YOU NEED SEND NO MONEY WITH THE ORDER. YOU NEED NOT KEEP IT IF, DURING TEN DAYS AFTER RECEIPT, YOU DO NOT CARE FOR IT. YOUR MARK TWAIN WILL BE SENT ON RECEIPT OF THE ORDER BENEATH.

HARPER & BROTHERS,

Franklin Square, New York.

Please send me for examination, carriage free, a set of MARK TWAIN'S WORKS, Author's National Edition, twenty-five volumes, cloth binding. If I do not care for the books, I will return them in ten days at your expense. If I keep the books I will remit to you $2.00 a month until the full price, $25.00, has been paid. S. P. C.

Name .....

Address .....

The Black Cat's Classified Advertising

RATE—60 cents an agate line. 5 per cent. cash discount. Minimum space 5 agate lines.
Forms close about the 20th of second month preceding date of publication.

GAMES AND ENTERTAINMENTS

kinds iron, wood, and wire puzzles. Cata- and leader 10c., 3 for 25c., 7 for 50c., 15 for o. No two alike.
stern Puzzle Works, Station B, St. Paul, Minn.

NTRILOQUISM learned by any Man or Boy Home. Small cost. Send today 2-cent stamp particulars and proof.
A. Smith, R. 48, 823 Bigelow St., Peoria, Ill.

EE Big Catalog (Illustrated), of Magic Tricks Puzzles with wonderful 20th Century Card k, 10c. Mystify your friends.
LWEN MAGIC, 150 Nassau St., New York.

STATIONERY AND PRINTING

ds, circulars, books, newspaper. Press $5 er $18. Rotary $60. Save money. Big t printing for others. All easy, rules sent. te factory for press catalog, TYPE, cards, r, outfits, etc.
E PRESS CO., - - - - Meriden, Conn.

FINE CALLING CARDS 100 FOR 25c.
R MEN, WOMEN, GIRLS, AND BOYS. ted in Script or Old English. 100 FREE if send $1.00 for 4 orders. Club with your nds. *All orders filled promptly.*
man E. Cassino, 134 Main St., Peabody, Mass.

SUITABLE PRESENT. 100 sheets of note r and envelopes printed, postpaid to any ad- s for $1.25. We do all kinds of printing. te for our latest sample book.
SENTHAL BROS., 314 Canal, Chicago, Ill.

OUT IN THE OPEN

EE TO EVERY BOY AND GIRL. We give e Eureka Camera and complete outfit, plates, icals, etc., with full instructions. Just send name and address, we send you 24 papers Eye Needles. Sell 2 papers for 10c., giving imble free. When sold send us the $1.20 and Camera and complete outfit is yours. Address GLOBE CO., Dept. 287, Greenville, Pa.

e finished pictures in two minutes! No dark m—No expensive films or plates. In order to e our new cameras known in every locality, shall sell them at half price for a short time Write at once for full information.
don Camera Co., 1556 Stuyvesant Bldg., N. Y.

MONEY IN BOAT LIVERY!

ship in any quantity. Need No Boat House. er Leak, Rust, Check, Crack or Rot. Abso- y safe. Every boat has water-tight compart- ts, so cannot sink. 20 different designs. te TODAY for FREE illustrated Catalog Special Factory Prices.
igan Boat Co., 148 Bellevue Av., Detroit, M.

AGENTS WANTED

PHOTOS DIRECT ON POST CARDS

No plates, films, printing, or dark room necessary. Start yourself in this big, quick-paying business. Tremendous opportunities. All or spare time. Address either office of **THE CHICAGO FERROTYPE CO., 601 Ferrotype Bldg., Chicago, Ill., or 601 Public Bank Bldg., New York, N. Y.**

WANTED. Anyone who has ever sold books, typewriters, insurance, Colliers, mining stocks, or anything else, to write me and learn how he can make $100 a month without making any investment but his time.
JOHN W. TALBOT, SOUTH BEND, IND.

Hundreds of good positions now open paying from $1,000.00 to $5,000.00 a year. No former experience required to get one of them. We will teach you to be a high grade Traveling Salesman or Saleswoman by mail in eight weeks and assist you to secure a good position where you can earn good wages while you are learning Practical Salesmanship. Write today for full particulars and testimonials from hundreds of men and women we have recently placed in good positions; also list of good positions open. Address (nearest office) Dept. 162, NATIONAL SALESMEN'S TRAINING ASSOCIATION. Chicago, New York, Kansas City, San Francisco, New Orleans, Toronto.

MISCELLANEOUS

SEND FOR FREE CATALOG. Write us today for our new Watch and Diamond Book. We trust everybody everywhere. No interest, no security, just common honesty among men.
Harris-Goar Co., Dept. 524 Kansas City, Mo.

We sell in small or large lots at wholesale. Write for free catalogue of trees, plants, and vines.
Green's Nursery Co., 48 Wall St., Rochester, N. Y.

RIEGER'S FLOWER DROPS. You have never seen anything like this before. The fragrance of thousands of blossoms in a vial 2 inches high. The most exquisite perfume science ever produced. Not diluted with alcohol. $1.50 at dealers or by mail. Send check, stamps or money order. 3 odors: Lily of the Valley, Rose, Violet. Money back if not pleased. Send 20c. silver or stamps for miniature bottle with long glass stopper. Please mention name of dealer. Address today.
PAUL RIEGER, 151 1st St., SAN FRANCISCO.

AUTOMATIC COMBINATION TOOL LIFTS

or pulls 3 tons, is a wire stretcher and splicer, post and stump puller, vise, clamp, wrench, cider press, etc. Patented automatic features make it work *easier* and *quicker*. Saves cost of eleven tools. 10 days FREE trial. Write today for booklet.
Automatic Jack Co., Box 170, Bloomsfield, Ind.

CONTENTS FOR JULY 1913

The Lime-Lighters
Leonora Price Kirk

For Reasons Personal
Robert W. Sneddon

The Beggar of Montierre
Francis Lee Rogers

First Aid to the Heiress
Frank X. Finnegan

A Blare of Trumpets
Florence Seyler Thompson

Winds of Chance
Marion Short

Passed By
Lowell Edwin Hardy

Vol. XVIII., No. 10. Whole No. 214.

Copyright, 1913, by The Shortstory Publishing Co.

WHY NOT BE AN ARTIST?

STUDY drawing at home under Expert Faculty. We have successful students in every part of the world. **Turn your Talent into money.** *Our Students are filling high salaried positions.* 14 years successful teaching. Endorsed by high authorities. 18 Courses in Commercial and Illustrative Drawing, Teachers' Normal and Applied Art. Profit or Culture.

Thoroughly Equipped Residence School

Artist's Outfit FREE to Enroled Students

Handsome ART YEARBOOK IS FREE TO YOU

SCHOOL OF APPLIED ART, 761 Applied Art Bldg., Battle Creek, Mich.

MAKE MONEY WRITING

STORY-WRITING TAUGHT BY MAIL

MSS. criticised, revised, and typed; also, sold on commission. Big story contest. Free booklet, "WRITING FOR PROFIT," tells how, gives proof.

Dept. 68, National Press Ass'n, Indianapolis, Ind.

We Have Paid Thousands of Dollars
TO AMATEUR SONG WRITERS. You may be able to write a steady seller and share in future profits. Send us your poems or melodies for only *Original* square deal offer. Acceptance guaranteed if available by *Largest, Most Successful Music Publishers* of the kind.

SONG POEMS WANTED

We arrange, publish, advertise, secure copyright in your name and pay you 50 per cent of profits if successful. Hundreds of testimonials from song writers. Don't delay—write today for subscription to our big Song Writer's Magazine—valuable illustrated book on song writing and examination of your work *free.*

Dugdale Co., 173 Dugdale Bldg., Washington, D. C.

DO YOU WANT CASH

For your MSS.? FISHER'S FRATERNITY OF FABRICATORS will help you. *Write for booklet.*

F. O. FISHER, - - 2067 Bush Street, - - San Francisco, Cal.

SONG POEMS WANTED HID MONEY IN SUCCESSFUL SONGS. NEW PLAN. PUBLICATION GUARANTEED IF ACCEPTED. PAST EXPERIENCE UNNECESSARY. SEND US YOUR POEMS OR MELODIES. WE PAY 50 PER CENT. HAYWORTH'S MUSICAL MAGAZINE AND BEAUTIFULLY ILLUSTRATED BOOK FREE. HUNDREDS DELIGHTED. HAYWORTH MUSIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, 8019, WASHINGTON, D.C. **WRITE US TODAY**

Short-Story Writing

Dr. Esenwein

A Course of forty lessons in the history, form, structure, and writing of the Short-Story taught by Dr. J. Berg Esenwein, Editor of Lippincott's Magazine.

One student writes: "I know that you will be pleased when I tell you that I have just received a check for $125 from 'Everybody's' for a humorous story. They ask for more. I am feeling very happy, and very grateful to Dr. Esenwein."

Also courses in Photoplay Writing, Versification and Poetics, Journalism. In all, over One Hundred Courses, under professors in Harvard, Brown, Cornell, and other leading colleges.

250-Page Catalog Free. Please Address

The Home Correspondence School
Dept. 73 Springfield, Mass.

IF YOU ARE A WRITER
We can aid you to find a market
MSS. SUCCESSFULLY PLACED
Criticised, Revised, Typewritten. Send for leaflet E.
References: Edwin Markham and others. Established 189
UNITED LITERARY PRESS 123 5th AVE. NEW YORK.

PLOTS WANTED FOR Motion Picture **PLAY**

You can write them. Manufacturers now paying $25 to $100 for ea We teach you how to write and sell them. No previous experience nec Write now for free details.

ASS'D MOTION PICTURE SCHOOLS, 674 C Sheridan Road, Ch

GET ON THE VAUDEVILLE STAGE

I tell you how! Fascinating profession for either sex. Big salaries. Experience unnecessary. Splendid engagements always waiting. Opportunity for travel. Theatrical agents and authorities endorse my methods. Thirty years' experience as manager and performer. Illustrated book **"All About Vaudeville"** sent FREE.

Frederic La Delle, Sta. 48 Jackson, Mich

AS A WRITER

You will find THE EDITOR, now in its 10th year, a twice-monthly stimulus to the production and sale of more and better manuscripts. Besides articles by writers and editors and answers to questions of vital importance to writers, each number contains news of the opportunities offered to writers to dispose of all kinds of manuscripts.

Jack London says, "THE EDITOR taught me how to solve the stamp and land-lady problems."

Send 10 cents for copy of current number, or $1.50 for yearly subscription.

THE EDITOR, Box M, Ridgewood, N. J.

"1001 Places to Sell Manuscripts," 9th edition, lists 2802 markets for short stories, serials, poems, etc. Price $1.50, postpaid.

Prepare for College at Home

You can prepare for College or complete your high school work at home by our simplified correspondence methods. **Our courses meet all entrance requirements;** they are written by members of the faculties of Columbia, Cornell, Pennsylvania, Mass. Inst. of Technology, Illinois, Chicago, Michigan and other leading universities. The **American School** is one of the largest educational institutions in the world and employs no agents, solicitors or collectors. Write for special College Preparatory Booklet.

American School of Correspondence
5808 Drexel Avenue Chicago, U. S. A.

RINT IN BINDING

The Black Cat

A Monthly Magazine of Original Short Stories

Published at Salem, Mass.

Copyright, 1913, by The Shortstory Publishing Co. All rights reserved.

Vol. XVIII., No. 10 JULY, 1913 10 cents a copy
Whole No., 214 $1.00 a year

Entered at the Post-Office at Salem, Mass., as second-class matter.

THE BLACK CAT is devoted to original, unusual, fascinating stories — every number is complete in itself. It publishes no serials, translations, borrowings, or stealings. It pays nothing for the name or reputation of a writer, but the highest price on record for *stories that are stories*, and it pays not by length, but by strength. Manuscripts should be addressed to Editorial Dept., Salem, Mass., and must be accompanied by addressed and stamped envelope for return if unavailable. All MSS. are received and returned at their writers' risk.

CAUTION.— *The entire contents of* THE BLACK CAT *are protected by copyright, and publishers everywhere are cautioned against reproducing any of the matter, either wholly or in part.*

The Lime-Lighters*

BY LEONORA PRICE KIRK

THEY had met by chance. Most people do, in Goldbrick, and many live that way. The pessimist—an appellation which his habit of discouraging comment had won for him—had been an artist long before the wanderlust had lured him to this mining town in Death Valley. The missionary had come to the land of the wild, with a message for those brothers who would not listen and who had left him to starve. The physician, thirsting for gold and adventure, had deserted his career. And Laddie, the youth with a halo of curls about his rosy face, yet hoped to earn enough to pay his expenses at college.

But the time came when these tenderfooted prospectors awoke to the realization that they were far from home—and stranded. So the pessimist called his indigent friends together to talk over his latest plans for the recuperation of their ailing fortunes.

"I'm thinking we might give a series of entertainments in the town hall," he said to them. "The people of this place are starving for amusement other than roulette and fantan. Of course the theatre will come later. This town's so new Eastern theatrical men don't know of it. But that's to *our* advantage. Now's our chance!"

The doctor caught up the argument and swept them into the current of his enthusiasm.

*Copyright, 1913, by The Shortstory Publishing Company. Copyright secured in Great Britain. All rights reserved.

"His Reverence can make a speech," he reasoned, "you, my dear Pessimist, do a magnificent clog, and Laddie's violin can serve as orchestra, while I've made enough of a study of hypnotism to enable me to amuse an audience of miners."

"Bully!" agreed the one-time artist. "To-morrow I'll fix up those posters."

And even His Reverence laughed.

The next morning found the pessimist among the crowd gathered in front of the high board fence that enclosed the lot near the town hall, which he and his friends had engaged for the promotion of their scheme.

Upon an immense sheet of paper, which was tacked across the boards, ran this announcement:

There is going to be a SHOW in this hall to-night. If you think this is a LIE, come and see for yourself. The program will not begin until the house is FULL. So don't forget your friends. They might feel lonesome without you.

Then the Tenor will sing.

The Missionary will talk to you.

The Doctor will explain hypnotism,

And The Leading Lady will *dance*.

Below, superbly done, was a small sketch of Her. With Vandyke omitted, and the face turned in a shadowy profile, the artist had idealized and feminized his own rather handsome features, rejuvenating the expression which had grown cynical with the years.

Near this sketch was scrawled:

P.S. If you are broke, pay the doorkeep' in *shares*. *Leading Lady*.

As the pessimist stood silently by, enjoying his own subtle piece of art, two miners elbowed their way through the crowd to his side. Lost in wonder, Budd Lankerdam looked long and thoughtfully at the words, and then at the picture of Her. A thin smile wavered uncertainly across his desert-bronzed face.

"Why not use shares for tickets?" he questioned. "You know, Pat, our old mine in the range—"

"Um-hm! The one what didn't pan out two years ago?"

"Same. Now the boys 've clean forgot about our Pink Geranium. This here consarn might give her a boost."

"Advertise!"

"Bet yer life. All she needs, too. There's plenty of pay dirt deep down. I got some samples in my pocket what sure look good to me. But it ain't so easy to raise the money for that shaft."

Klondyke Pat rubbed his red-gold head. "If we could land one o' thim tourists, fer instance."

"If there's one wanderin' round these diggin's a-huntin' *experience,* it'd be too bad to have him miss it," and Budd's face lengthened horizontally.

Arm in arm, and deep-sunk in their plans for the advertising of their new-old mine, the Pink Geranium, the miners wended their way through the crowd that had by this time increased to several hundred.

That night the curtain went up, for the house was full. A few straggled in late and were granted standing room. The pessimist, who stood at the door, noted that the foremost straggler was a tourist who had "back East" written in the cut of his garments and in every delicate lineament of his untanned face.

The doorkeeper felt a brawny hand press heavily upon his shoulder as a generous bouquet of pink geraniums was thrust at him.

"Here, doorkeep'," whispered Klondyke Pat, "you give this to Her."

The pessimist bowed low over the flamboyant floral piece.

"We'll pay in shares," Budd explained. "Don't know your names, but you can write 'em in that space there. Five hundred shares apiece in the Pink Geranium, the fairest flower of Funeral Range. Does that let us into your circus?"

"Take your choice of the remaining seats," answered the gracious doorkeeper.

"And say, pard," Klondyke Pat said in low tones, "if you could chuck in an idea or two about that mine o' our'n, you might make a hit—*sabe?*"

"In which direction is it?"

"Toward the northeast corner of the right side lower aidge of the first foothill beyond the third gulch to the left of the trail that leads through the second gap in the range."

"I could find my way there in the dark," murmured the pessimist.

And Budd, detecting the veiled sarcasm, called out reassuringly over his shoulder: "Say, she ain't no wild kitty, pard."

While the crowd was gathering, the orchestra played solitaire. He played well, too. The music-hungry people lent their appreciative attention.

A hush fell upon the audience when the curtain was drawn apart, and the missionary came to the front of the stage. His tall muscular frame, his kind, rugged face compelled respect. Beside, their curi-

osity was piqued. A missionary at a show! Surely this was but part of the fun those posters promised.

Awaiting his turn, and shielded by the folds of the sliding curtain, the pessimist overheard the comments of his new friends who were seated just below him in the front row.

"Aw-now," protested Klondyke Pat in aggrieved tones, "sure he can't be no missionary. He ain't said hell and damnation a single time."

"He don't believe in no hell," and Budd spoke in accents of deep regard.

"How do you know that?" inquired his puzzled partner.

"Well," Budd went on, "lot o' these here missionary folks, you know, they jest carry the gridiron and brimstun around in their countenances. Can spot 'em anywhere! That hot doctrine don't suit this torrid zone. But this fellow, now,—say, pard, he don't look hellish."

And he didn't. The missionary gave them a clear talk full of everyday wisdom and brotherly charity. No high-sounding words were used. His audience understood him, and when he sat down, they sincerely applauded.

Next the doctor spoke of the power of the subconscious mind, and some recent demonstrations of telepathy. The boys listened in silence. But when he went into a trance the attention grew tense. In general terms he mentioned the future, pirouetted about the subjects of mines and mining, and, having had full instructions from the pessimist, settled at last upon a lengthy and vivid underground description of the Pink Geranium.

"There's a gentleman in this audience from back East," the clairvoyant sleepily murmured. "Before investing in any other mines it would be well for him to get an expert's opinion on the samples of ore recently found in the Pink Geranium."

And the pessimist, with an eye at the hole in the curtain, saw that Klondyke Pat looked worried.

"He's spreadin' it on too thick," the miner objected.

But the entranced one had his weather eye on Herr Tourist. To see that his words were taking effect one needed only to watch the absorbed expression of that listener.

At the psychological moment the pessimist slid the curtain across the stage.

A hush fell upon the assembly as the orchestra announced that the leading lady would now dance. Expectancy ran riot.

Aided by some material which a passing show had left in the dressing room, and by his own inventive powers, the pessimist's make-up was wonderfully like that of some buxom young woman. His Vandyke had disappeared behind the half-mask which only the artist's genius could have made so lifelike, and the billowy skirts of some stage-struck heroine concealed and yet revealed the lank limbs of the dancer.

The leading lady bowed. The audience cheered resoundingly. Laddie tuned up, waved his hand as a signal, and the dance was on. So was the leading lady!

"She's better lookin' movin' thin whin she's standin' still," said Klondyke Pat, loyally hopeful.

"She ain't a beauty, Patsy, but she's got music in her toes," and Budd gazed in wide-eyed admiration at the whirling dervish before him.

The next moment his long jaw sank in amazement. The lower portion of Her face had dropped away, and from beneath a high beruffled collar a grey, pointed beard unwound and floated sidewise in the breeze. The effect was weird.

Startled at this sudden transformation, the boys leaned over the gallery railing and gaped. Yet, the leading lady danced dauntlessly on. She had scuttled around in the skirt dance, had flung herself with inspiring frenzy into the Highland fling, had made a neat cut of the pigeon wing, and was grotesquely circling about the stage in the buzzard lope, feet alternately slapping the boards while her arms flapped vulture-like above, when—oh, suffering saints!—she struck a snag and fell in an indecorous heap upon the floor.

The boys sat in pitying silence a moment, then the awful comedy of the predicament overcame them. The hush was shattered by one long, loud guffaw, followed by peal after peal of hearty laughter.

The leading lady painfully raised herself upon her elbow and glared at the sea of hilarious faces below.

"Damn you!" she muttered in no stage whisper.

One gallery god leaned far over the railing, and, wiping the tears off on his coat sleeve, called out encouragingly: "Aw, come on, Bluebeard. Rattle your old slats again."

"Git up, grandpaw," came from another corner, "don't let 'em josh you."

"On with the dance!" encored the convulsed audience.

"Bully for Bluebeard!"

"Give us that new cure for the rheumatiz."

The pessimist rose to his knees and rubbed his shins. He had been severely jarred. Besides, the merciless criticism of that audience was not soothing to his nerves. To show his own contempt for their lack of sympathy, he now assumed a cynical indifference to all comment.

"Come, grandpaw, git up off yore knees," Budd Lankerdam called out in tones of anxiety. "This here ain't no prayer meetin'."

Between paroxysms the pessimist managed to get upon his feet. He faced that grinning concourse bravely, and with expression grim. So set was the lower jaw that the grey beard pointed straight out from his chin and toward his critics, like an accusing and threatening forefinger.

When the laughter had lulled, he spoke to them in tones that cut their merriment into mere ravelings.

"Gentlemen!"—dramatic and sarcastic intermission. "I thank you for your generous applause, for your encouraging words. But before I can respond to your hearty encore, before I shall ever again 'trip the light fantastic' or have my light fantastics tripped on the splinterous boards of your darned old stage, I'll take out an accident policy.

"Breth-er-en, the next thing on the program will be a vocal solo by the orchestra." So saying, the erstwhile leading lady limped forward, and taking the violin from Laddie, assisted him in a Jack-jump-over-the-candlestick leap across the footlights.

The youth, wholesome, pleasant indeed to look upon, took his stand in the center of the stage. His football curls, which had been developed at the Santa Rosa High, were in a fair fresco about his plump face. A murmur of approval passed through the auditorium.

Posed for his solo, Laddie waited. The grey-bearded lady who was to play the accompanying chords upon the violin, seemed to be in no haste. After the strenuous physical exercise of the dance, a lassitude had fallen upon the spirit of the pessimist. He held the violin as one holds a guitar, and in an absent-minded, careless manner. His thoughts were wandering afar,—along the trails of Funeral Range, in search of the hidden treasure of the Pink Geranium.

Laddie waited.

From somewhere near the ceiling a voice droned out: "Don't let us hurry you, kiddo."

Klondyke Pat rose and turned an indignant face toward the gallery.

"Aw—now," he protested, "stop jollyin' him, boys. Maybe he's dumb."

The soloist flushed deeply. Every second the silence grew more embarrassing. In dreamy detachment the accompanist gazed before him.

From the front row of the gallery drifted the pathetic, pleading tones: "If you cain't git the tune, sonny, jest give us the words. Spell 'em out on your fingers."

Applause.

The pessimist aroused at last. He looked about him in a dazed sort of way and began to tune up. By this time poor Laddie was so rattled that he thought the accompaniment had started, so he lifted his voice in song.

"Pore kid," said a grimy old miner, "he ain't got no chance. He's struck off on the wrong trail."

"Bet Bluebeard catches up," retorted his neighbor.

Budd Lankerdam slapped out his notebook and pencil.

"Take you up on that," he whispered eagerly.

Several heads bunched together.

"Twenty—fifty—aw, make it a hundred!"

The pessimist had commenced the accompaniment by now, but the singer was far in the lead.

"Old Bluebeard'll have to hit the high places if he ever catches up with that kiddo," sang out the voice near the ceiling.

"Budd!" came in a swift whisper from the gallery front row. "Put us down five hundred on the kid."

"We'll go you eight on the fiddle," Budd telephoned back with his hands. "Bluebeard's game."

"Bet yer life! Grandpaw's steamin' up. *Us* for a thousand on the old gal," challenged the crowd below.

Laddie's excited tones made wild leaps. In vain did he try to dodge those nerve-racking discords. But the pessimist was now thoroughly aroused. The excitement of the audience had entered into his soul.

They no longer talked in whispers. The betting went on openly. Budd was up this aisle, down that, communicating with the boys in the gallery, notebook in hand, enjoyment beaming from every inch of his round, ruddy countenance.

"Fifteen hundred on the kid!"

"Two thousand on Bluebeard!"

"Twenty-five hundred—"

"Gentlemen," called out the volunteer bookkeeper, "it's a close race."

"Thirty-two hundred on the kid!"

"Aw—you're wastin' your nuggets!" jeered the dress circle. "Bluebeard's goin' lickety-split. Three thousand on the old man!"

And above the tumult, Laddie's clear young tenor rang out:

" 'Honey boy, I hate to see you leaving.
Honey boy, you know my heart is grieving—' "

The row of feet that decorated the gallery railing tilted upward in soleful attention, or wagged rythmically back and forth to the swing of the music.

"They're on the home stretch!" Budd boomed, waving his note-book high.

Then the audience rose to a man.

"Four thousand on Bluebeard!" yelled the auditorium.

"We'll go you *that!*" the Laddyites mockingly roared back from the gallery.

" 'Honey boy—' "

The tenor swept on with unabated vigor, but the plunkety—plunk of the violin was gaining in that mad race. They were near the end when Laddie did an admirable vocal stunt by doubling up time. But the pessimist, unmindful of rhythm or harmony, was ringing the chords from those strings with a frenzy caught, perhaps, from that ejaculating, gesticulating, vociferating mob before them.

With a final flourish the accompanist struck the last two chords and landed his notes in harmony with the tones of the singer.

A hush fell upon the crowd. Silently they seated themselves,—all but Budd Lankerdam, who occupied the center aisle. Laddie drew a handkerchief across his moist forehead and took his seat beside the pessimist. Thus, together, these comrades doggedly faced public opinion.

At last Budd's voice dispelled the silence.

"Four thousand on each of 'em," he drawled. "Boys, it's a *tie!*"

Wild applause. The curtain swung across the stage.

Later, in the dressing room, the four friends sat. The pessimist was now clothed and in his right mind. At a table, the doctor complacently surveyed the returns from the door. They had taken in enough to keep them from starvation for six months.

Through the entrance, a committee, headed by Budd Lankerdam and the tourist, walked in.

"Me friends," began Budd, "we want to tell you how much we liked your show. The boys enjoyed it more'n any that's ever hit this town."

"'Specially the song," grinned Klondyke Pat.

"That's what we're here to mention," Budd continued. "We've brought you a few extra earnings on that last piece on your program. All the boys voted to treat you to a per centage of the stakes. Hope you'll blow it in on a good time."

"The stakes!" murmured His Reverence.

"It's for a good cause, parson," Budd argued, "and we want it to be a prosperous one."

"Thank you!" exclaimed three-fourths of the Goldbrick Stock Company in concert.

"It wuz a tie," Budd gave explanation.

"Really, gentlemen,—" objected the missionary, who was as yet bewildered.

"Don't mention it," the committee cordially admonished as they filed out of the doorway.

They were gone—all but the tourist. He stood, hat in hand, the recollection of the evening's amusement still lingering on his face. At last he turned to the late clairvoyant.

"About that mine, now—"

"'Don't mention it,'" quoted the conscience-stricken doctor.

"But I've seen Mr. Lankerdam's specimens! In my many years of travel and experience as an assayer, I've never found better ore. We begin on our shaft to-morrow."

And all through that night the leading lady muttered, as he tossed in his fitful slumber, "Five hundred shares in the Pink Geranium!"

For Reasons Personal*

BY ROBERT W. SNEDDON

HERE are some backs which impress you at the first glance. Those are the backs which furnish an unmistakable clue to the occupation and habits of their owners. The longer I looked at the straight back of the man at the next table, the surer I felt I was looking at a soldier. I was smoking a pipe in the Café Cosmopolitan, into which some whimsical fancy of adventure had wafted my wandering footsteps. The owner of the straight back was sitting in an atmosphere of loneliness, and a fellow-feeling attracted me to him. Now one cannot look long at a back without a subtle passage of thought, and the object of my regard turned slowly round, glanced at me casually, and smiled.

"Do you mind if I join you?" I asked, "I think we are both alone."

"Right-o. Glad to have yer company. I've been feelin' a bit out of it here by myself."

"Been in the army, haven't you?" I inquired as I sat down at his table.

"Yes," he answered curtly.

So we talked, and this is the story he told me when we had found our bearings.

* * * * * * *

"Well, here goes. It's all true, but when yer tired just say so, an' I'll dry up. Time o' the war it were, and though it's a goodish bit since then, I can't forget the blamed thing. Did me a lot o' good at the time it did, and most o' me chums blewed in a shillin' on bibles, but Lord love ye, them kind are too pally with death to take much truck with religion.

" 'The Swearers,' we was called—that was our company in the regiment—the old—well, that's neither here nor there—one o' the regiments o' the line that seen most o' the fightin'. We was called that along o' our blamed silly habit o' damnin' every blasted thing

* Copyright, 1913, by The Shortstory Publishing Company. Copyright secured in Great Britain. All rights reserved.

we run into, an' we could swear some—little credit to any of us. But the worst o' the bunch were the sergeant-major—Thomas we'll call him, though that weren't his name, an' he could curse like hell he could, an' have some over. The foulest mouth I've ever seen, an' I've seen a few in my day, believe me. But he's dead, an' the least said about that the better for all of us.

"Well, he had his knife into Billy Morgan, my chum. If ever there was a dirty job to be done, it was always 'Morgan, do this an' be damned quick about it too,' an' a string o' names that I won't go to repeat, but it done him no good in the long run, as you'll see. Seemed to take a particular pleasure in sockin' it into him whenever he could, an' he never was hard put to land on some dirty job for him. What was at the back of it, I don't quite know, but from somethin' Billy let drop once, it were over a gal they was both mashed on. I guess she had the good sense to take Billy and the sergeant-major was dead sore.

"Most of us chaps liked Billy an' hated the sergeant-major worse nor poison, but blimey, it weren't no good us blokes sayin' a word, an' as for thinkin' o' gettin' even, the discipline is fair worked to death in wartime, an' none of us were so keen to get up and dig our own graves just then. But if black looks could have killed, then he must have felt precious dead more nor once.

"Billy never said a word one way nor the other, but if ever a man were driven to his death that man were Billy Morgan. Pleasant soft-spoken country bloke he was, pinky cheeks an' a bit of a fair mustache, an' he took his gruellin' like a man, but it fair cut him to the heart to be treated like he was, though he never let on.

"The end started about the time we was lyin' camped near five miles outer Pretoria an' all town-leave stopped. Some o' our fellows had forgot their manners in a beer factory. We was all thinkin' o' home—for we had gotten a new rig out for the voyage an' the percession business at the other end. About time most of us had it, too, bein' reduced to wearin' holes. Yes, sir, suits o' holes. An' boots! Gawd! The boots that some dirty sheeny had dumped on the stores-inspector. Well, there was we with new shirts, boots, an' uniforms, all togged out gay like, thinkin' o' Southampton—an' other things what meant home. Whole thing fixed up for the home trail. Only waitin' orders from Capetown to git and clear.

"One night we was lyin' out on our old rubber sheets, rifles by our sides. Must have been about two in the mornin', far as I can recollect, when the bugles sing out an' we all of us cocks our ears an' sits up. The sergeants makes a bee line for the sergeant-major's. You

could have knocked me down with a feather when the sergeant comes back blowin'. Forced march in half an hour for Rustenburg. Jings, we were the down-in-the-mouth crowd an' there was the devil of a growlin' in all ranks. The colonel pipes 'em to give us a good feed an' a tot o' rum, an' by four o'clock we was up an' on our way.

"Ever marched in the bush? Then my advice is—don't. Them mimosa bushes scratch the very duds off yer an' keep springin' back an' hitting yez in the eye. Billy Morgan was marchin' mates with me an' he was anything but well—touch o' fever he had. The sergeant-major was close to us an' kept rubbin' it in, damnin' his neck for bein' such a baby an' needin' apron strings an' so on, till I has to speak up for the poor chap.

"'Can't yez see he's sick?' says I.

"Well, he lets fly my arm's length o' cursin', but he says never a word direct. He knows fine there's many a bullet might fly wide an' make a neat an' delicate hole in a sergeant's tunic somewhere in the back, an' it wouldn't be the first time that happened if I've heard right.

"Came on to rain, too, an' us peggin' on in the dark, holdin' each other's hand for fear we should fall out o' line an' get lost. I tell you I never seen a more welcome sight than the daylight, an' we did our twenty-two mile stretch that day with two halts for grub an' rest.

"When we did land for the night in a mealie field, we hadn't no tents so we just scraped a heap o' dirt an' lay on it with our rubber sheets between. Good enough for us swaddies it were, an' I was just droppin' off when Thomas comes by.

"'Lyin' easy?' says he stoppin'.

"'As easy as may be,' says Billy, 'considerin'.'

"The sergeant looks at him queerly.

"'What d' yez mean?'

"'Nothin' but what goes home to yer, sergeant!'

"The sergeant-major gives a kind o' strained laugh.

"'Hell!' says he, 'I don't see you've anythin' to whine about.'

"'Maybe not, but if I sleep tonight, it's none o' your doin',' says Billy.

"'You're nothin' but a damned cantank'rous brute, that's what you are, Morgan, an' yez can sleep in hell tonight for all I care,' an' with that he moves on.

"'Maybe you're right,' says Billy, an' turns over.

"'Never mind him, Billy,' says I, but he makes no answer.

"Billy was lyin' next to me, you see, on the very outside o' the whole regiment, an' the rain kept swishin' into some bushes near us. It was thund'rin' and lightnin' to beat everythin', an' I had a kind o' notion, just before I falls asleep, that Billy was prayin'—sort of a turn he took, seems to me.

"I don't know how long I slept, but all at once a terrible peal wakens me—you would have thought the bottom o' the sky was fallin' out—an' then there was the most blood-curdlin' screech—beast or man, I couldn't say, but it makes my blood run cold even to think of it, the damn thing. Gawd! It were somethin' to remember all yer life. Must have wakened the whole regiment, for a regular panic sets in. It was black as hell, an' all the elements let loose, an' the enemy, Gawd knows where. Chaps gets rushin' here an' there, cryin' out an' stampedin', with their nerves all up the pole—what with the long march an' the storm. The worst hullabaloo yez could imagine. Good thing some fool didn't get firin' promiscuous. Pitch dark it were an' not a light showin'. Some fools began to tramp on me, so I gets up, just in time to hear the officers come around an' unload the biggest cargo o' cursin' they held. Ever seen a crowd run with fear o' somethin' they can't see? Well, it ain't a pretty sight. We gets quieted down somewhat, an' I sleeps like a log till the mornin'.

"At roll call the colonel, fiery-nosed old cove with a Victoria Cross, gives us a right dressin' down on the subject o' discipline, an' then the roll was called. Came to our company an' I was lookin' round for Billy. Never occurred to me to look for him till that minute. I hears his name called, an' there's no answer. Called again, an' the same. The sergeant-major yells out then:—

"'Anyone seen Private Morgan?'

"We looks at each other and the sergeant-major gets red. Why? Gawd alone knows.

"'What's wrong, sergeant-major?' says the colonel, riding up.

"'Private Morgan missing, sir,' says he uneasy like.

"'Detail "A Company" as a search party. I hope he hasn't been sniped, or maybe mauled by some beast,' says he.

"'A Company,'—that was mine—began to search about. First thing we did was to look where Billy had been lyin', an' sure as fate there had been some beast there, for though the rain had washed away 'most everythin', there were marks of somethin' big. No blood; no; none. That were the queer thing, an' all we could think of was that a lion—for only a lion would be likely to carry off a man in them parts—had slipped in, nipped him up an' away. But which

on 'em screamed—well, none of us liked to think much about it. We did follow up what seemed to be a trail, but it come to nothin', an' I began to think that maybe the poor chap had been driven to run away an' do himself quietly to death. It wasn't for me to say such a thing, howsomever, an' it were accepted by all o' them that a lion had done for poor Billy. His kit were auctioned, an' the sergeant-major took a bit of a locket, though what he did with it, no one knows; but there was a bit o' bad blood about him darin' to handle any o' Billy's things. Said he'd see to his folks gettin' it, him bein' evidently the only one as knew where they was.

"I don't know what took us chaps, but we got to thinkin' that the sergeant-major was just about ripe for his dues, an' some o' the fellows had a bet on it, though most o' them fought shy o' it for fear o' it bringin' bad luck, an' quite right too. No matter what a man is, it ain't for the likes o' his fellows to judge him. That's safe enough with his Maker.

"Five days' march we had to Rustenburg, an' nothin' but a few snapshots at us on the way. Might have been walkin' along Oxford Street for all the excitement in it. When we come to Rustenburg, there was no place for us to put up at but a new church, an' though lots o' men—when they heard it weren't consecrated, it bein' just new up—got superstitious an' feelin' regular funky, we was marched into it, an' settled for the night; an' damn glad to have a roof over my head again, I was. Plain sort o' a buildin'; wooden floor an' roof, an' rows o' hard benches what we had to sleep on. Some o' the chaps got fixed up in the pulpit. They hadn't no gas in the place and no electric light. They was so terribly frightened about fire that it was all they could do to let us use an oil lamp to undress by, so you can see that there weren't much light in the church.

"Thomas was up to his old tricks again, an' 'A Company' was kept busy fixin' up straw beds here an' there for the officers—a captain an' a lieutenant we had with us—an' by the time we got to bed most everyone was lyin' down an' blowin' off steam. I was mighty glad to slip off my boots, an' get myself down. It seemed to be just a minute before I was wakened up sudden by someone callin' out loud. I listens, an' my Gawd, you can say what you likes about fear, but I had it bad that moment.

"'Sergeant-major Thomas,' someone calls, an s' help if I'm not tellin' the truth, it was Billy Morgan's voice. It was Billy Morgan's voice, but changed—stronger an' more clear like.

"'Are yer lyin' easy, Thomas?' it calls again.

"I turns to my pal next to me to waken him but I finds he's awake an' shakin' all over.

" 'D' yez hear that, Jock?' he says.

" 'Too true,' says I, 'that's Billy Morgan.'

"Just as I says that, there was a kind o' half-strangled scream, an' before I knew, a bullet whizzes by my ear and bashes into a window at the back. With the report an' crash o' the fallin' glass they all were wide awake. The lamp was still burnin', an' I sits up to see the sergeant-major standin' up with a rifle in his hands an' glarin' somethin' wild. Seemed to be seein' things, an' mutterin' to himself. All in one corner he was, with his back to the wall, an' it bein' white he showed up against it, but what were strange, he seemed to have a double shadow—whether that were the light, or what, no one'll ever know.

"The lieutenant, gettin' the hang o' things, cries out sharp:

" 'Drop that rifle, Thomas!'

"But he never pays any heed. Just swings back an' forrad breathin' hard an' keepin' his eyes glued to the one spot. Seemed as if he was fightin' against somethin' as wanted him to go, for he cries out all at onct:

" 'No! No! Take him away!'

"The lieutenant signs to us to grab him, an' we was just goin' to take a flyin' run at him when he gives a cry o' 'To hell with you, Billy Morgan, where you come from,' an' straightens himself an' lets fly with his rifle. We ducks, but he gets the lieutenant somewhere. Some of us runs at him, and gets him nailed, though not before he plugs a bullet through somebody's arm, an' hits me a welt that shakes every tooth in my head. Ravin' mad he was, cryin' out that Billy Morgan was beck'nin' an' makin' faces at him, an' that he had a great hole in his neck. Howsomever, we ties him up, an' gags him, for he was screamin' an' shoutin' fit to knock the church down. He might have come to his senses that night if he had known he had done for the lieutenant—a nice young chap—with a bullet through the heart.

"You can guess there was precious little sleep that night, an' very few as slept inside the church. What had happened sobered up the men considerable, an' there was near a revival meetin' in the camp.

"They gave the sergeant-major a day to come to his senses, an' then sent him his— 'Whereas on the night o' so an' so, without due cause, et cetera,'—an' the next mornin' he was marched into the colonel's tent, with a file an' fixed bayonets. Course he was guilty, but that didn't prevent him gettin' his trial just like any other man. I wasn't in the file, but one o' them as was, told me Thomas said

nothin' except when the colonel asked if he was guilty, he just nodded his head an' said 'Yes, sir.' Even when the colonel, after a bit o' coughin' for it went against his grain to do such a thing, said the sentence of the court—himself an' two majors—which was that he be taken out an' shot at sunrise—an' Gawd have mercy on his soul, he didn't say a word, but kept in a dazed state, starin' over beyond the colonel's shoulders.

"It fell to me to be one o' the twelve to form the firin' squad an' no pleasant thing, even though we did have a grudge against him. I hardly slept a wink that night thinkin' of it. Different thing pottin' at the enemy when you know he's willin' to return the compliment—but this—well, this were different. The mornin' came, an' our sergeant took our rifles an' went into the tent with 'em. When he comes out he says: 'Eight o' them rifles is loaded with shell an' four with blank. Which is which none o' yer need know.' Sort o' spares the feelin's, that does.

"The fatigue party had dug the grave, an' we sets out, the prisoner in our midst. Hung his head the whole time, an' even when they stripped his chevrons, he seemed to be dreamin'. His fingers kept workin' an that was the only sign we knew he knew. The chaplain spoke to him an' said a prayer when he was placed in front o' the grave, but he might have been dead for all the heed he paid to him. It gave me the creeps to see him so close to death an'—well, some natures is different built. When they tried to bandage his eyes he pushed them away. I can tell you my pulse was beatin' fierce when everything was ready.

"It was goin' to be one of them clear fine days, an' the sun was comin' up an' everything lookin' just lovely. We didn't get time to think much, though, before— 'Ready,—Present,—Rifles to shoulder,—Finger on trigger,—' But we never got the word, 'Fire,' for a sudden single shot rings out from somewhere and Thomas pitches forrad on his face without a kick.

"The sergeant looks at us.

" 'My Gawd,' he says, 'if I knew who fired that shot, I'd break him.'

"But we says never a word. How could we? We stands there dumb, with our rifles still up to our shoulders, and lookin' silly.

" 'Lay down them rifles an' two paces back,' says the sergeant, lookin' queer at us.

"We laid the rifles down an' stepped back two paces. The captain hurries forrad, an' the doctor comes forrad. The doctor turns the body.

"'Dead—instantaneous,' he says curt like, an' turns back the shirt. Then he starts, as I seen, an' looks at the body careful. Then he talks in a whisper to the sergeant an' the captain.

"'Boys,' says the sergeant, comin' back an' keepin' his eyes off us, 'I'm goin' to examine them rifles accordin' to orders, for I have to report.'

"So he examines them one by one, emptyin' the breeches an' smellin' the barrels careful. When he gets through he stands thinking for a bit.

"'All right, pick 'em up an' dismiss,' says he at last. 'By the bye,' he adds nervous like, 'you needn't say anythin' to the others, but if it's any consolation to yez, the doctor can't find no bullet mark an'—'

"'But,' says I, 'how did he come to die, an' who fired—?'

"'How do I know!' snaps the sergeant, crossin' himself—him bein' a Catholic—an' walkin' away quick.

"Yes, he come to his end all right, he did. But how, neither you nor me can say. I always get mad at them fools as laughs at anythin' they can't understand. Wait till they runs up against it as I have."

"Then you don't suppose Billy Morgan had anything to do with it?" I asked after he had stopped speaking.

He stirred uneasily in his seat.

"There's no sayin', he said. "I took a squint at the body an' well —there was the plainest finger prints on his throat I've ever seen.— I think we'll have something to drink."

First Aid to the Heiress*

BY FRANK X. FINNEGAN

URWOOD was standing beside the motor car admiring its graceful lines, the sweep of the body from front to rear, the tremendous energy compressed beneath its hood. His visored cap was thrust far back on his curly head and in gauntlets and leather leggins he could well have posed for a picture of the modern Jehu. A drop of oil on the polished brass rim of a lamp caught his attention and he leaned forward to remove it with a finger of his well-worn glove. So intent was he on his occupation that he failed to hear a voice behind him, a feminine voice at that, until its owner had spoken a second time.

"I beg your pardon," she said so sharply that Curwood, feeling certain he had been addressed, turned to her quickly. He saw that she was young and as pretty as any girl can be in a shapeless motor coat and bonnet, with fur-trimmed goggles perched above her eyebrows and traces of grime, not to mention vexation and fatigue, upon her face. Curwood removed his cap.

"Excuse me," he said, "I didn't know you were speaking to me."

She nodded an acknowledgement with just a touch of imperiousness and continued:

"I was wondering whether I might have the use of this car for a little while to tow my machine back to Lyle. My engine has broken down and I can see it will be impossible to repair it outside of a shop. If I could have a car to tow it home it would be *so* much quicker than using a team of horses—"

She paused questioningly and Curwood spoke without hesitation.

"I have no objection in the world," he said, "the car isn't in use, you see, and it might much better be towing you home than standing around here doing nothing."

He smiled in his most friendly manner but the girl in the lavender bonnet received it icily. Evidently he was not to presume upon an acquaintanceship growing out of this emergency.

* Copyright, 1913, by The Shortstory Publishing Company. Copyright secured in Great Britain. All rights reserved.

"I am Miss Astwood," she said," you have possibly heard of my father--James Astwood of Lyle."

To a bystander her use of the word "possibly" might have sounded a trifle sarcastic. No person could have been in that county longer than twenty minutes and not have heard of James Astwood, of Lyle, owner of the trolley line, the bank, the paper mills and most other things that were producing revenues. But there was no bystander to reflect upon the phrase Miss Astwood had used, and Curwood, blinking the least bit over the proximity of the heiress, merely bowed and stepped aside from the door of the car.

"My name is Curwood," he said, "will you drive it yourself?"

Miss Astwood looked at him in surprise for just a moment. Then she jerked open the door beside the driver's seat and began to clamber in.

"As you please," she answered, "I might just as well as not."

She settled herself easily, seized the wheel, and was about to press the starting switch when she glanced over her shoulder and observed Curwood standing where she had left him, with his gauntleted hands on his hips and admiring the car more than ever with such a divinity at the levers.

"Aren't you coming?" she demanded.

Curwood shrugged his shoulders.

"Well, really, you know," he said, "you hadn't asked me. You only spoke of needing the car—"

Miss Astwood bit her lip in vexation. As an heiress, she was not accustomed to this sort of stupidity in those around her.

"I do wish you would come—if you don't mind," she said, "I will need you to ride in my car and steer it while I tow it home. Or if you would rather drive this car—"

"Oh, no," Curwood said lightly, "I will be delighted to steer your car. It was stupid of me not to realize you meant to include me—"

He was climbing in as he spoke and Miss Astwood cut short his excuses by starting the car with a jerk that threw him back against the cushions.

That there was no question about her ability in the driving of an automobile Curwood realized before they had gone a quarter of a mile. The high-powered engine purred and throbbed under her deft manipulation and the car leaped forward so smoothly and valiantly that Miss Astwood's delight in motoring overcame her hauteur and she actually flashed a smile back at Curwood over her shoulder.

"This is a beautiful car," she volunteered,

"Yes, it is," he admitted, "it's by far the best car I've ever ridden in. You drive it well," he added boldly.

The heiress smiled with self-satisfaction.

"I ought to," she said, "father has seven cars and I'm driving one or the other of them most of the time I'm awake."

Conversation languished for a few minutes after that. Curwood could think of nothing to say that would fit the situation and Miss Astwood paid strict attention to the clutch and the steering wheel until the stalled auto came into sight around a bend of the road. It stood partly in the ditch, under a tree.

"Here's my car," she said, slowing down to a stop, "when the engine died on me and I found I couldn't fix it, I had to shove the machine over there so it wouldn't blockade the road. I wish you had been here then."

"So do I," he said frankly, "I don't do many things well but I believe I could push an automobile with the next fellow."

Miss Astwood had jumped lightly to the ground and Curwood followed as nimbly as he might. He thought he discerned a tightening of her lips which might indicate that his persiflage, however well intended, was not particularly welcome. She walked to her car, raised the hood, and looked anxiously at the engine for a few moments.

"Possibly you could fix it," she suggested, turning upon him suddenly where he stood with a bland smile.

"Possibly I could," he admitted, "I never fixed an engine just like that one but you never know what you can do until you try."

Still he stood looking idly at the oily array of pipes and cylinders until Miss Astwood stamped her little foot the least trifle with impatience.

"Well, *will* you try, please?" she suggested icily. Curwood gave a guilty start toward the car.

"Oh, certainly!" he said, "I didn't know you wanted me to attempt it."

He opened the tool box, took out half a dozen wrenches and hammers, and dropped them in the road with a clatter. Then he selected the largest wrench, peered into the engine, and after choosing a point of attack, began industriously unscrewing a steel cap. Having removed it, he applied his eyes to the pipe it had closed and endeavored to look into its gloomy depths. Miss Astwood watched him anxiously.

"Can you do anything with it?" she inquired when he ceased peering into the pipe.

"I'm afraid not," he said with a little sigh, "you would better take this to the shop, Miss Astwood. I wouldn't attempt to fix it."

Saying which he gathered up the tools, dumped them into the box, and stood back awaiting orders. She looked at him in thinly veiled disgust.

"There's a tow-rope in the tool box somewhere," she said, "would you be good enough to get it out and hitch these cars together? I've lost nearly two hours' time, as it is."

Curwood found the rope in its proper place and gravely began examining Miss Astwood's car for a likely spot to attach it.

"You seem to be prepared for emergencies," he observed as he knelt before the front axle and set to work, "do you have many breakdowns?"

For a moment or two it seemed that Miss Astwood intended to ignore this bit of impertinence. Curwood, watching covertly, saw her toss her pretty little head impatiently as she turned away to examine the big car that was to help her out of her difficulties. Then she relented, possibly because of the spectacle he presented groveling in the dirt in her service.

"I never had one before," she said, "father has a rope carried on all of the cars not only to assist us in case of accidents but to use if we should find anyone stalled on the road."

"Oh, I see," he said, rising and brushing the dust from his corduroys, "it's a very good idea, isn't it?"

She vouchsafed no answer to his query but watched him impatiently as he fastened the rope to the big touring car. The knots, at least, met with her approval.

"That's very good," she said when Curwood stepped back to view his work, "I think that will hold, all right. Now if you'll just get into my car and keep it straight in the road, I'll get to Lyle in a hurry."

She was climbing into the touring car as she spoke, and he obediently took his place at the wheel of her helpless machine, but he could not resist the temptation to tell her how he viewed her eagerness to drive the forward car.

"It will look better this way," he observed. "If we should pass anyone on the road they will think I had the breakdown and you are helping me home."

Miss Astwood threw in the clutch vigorously.

"Please don't worry about what people along this road may think," she said over her shoulder, "nothing concerns me less."

Then she started the big car with a jerk and when the tow-rope

tightened Curwood went careening along behind her, the bland smile with which he had entered upon the mild adventure still irradiating his countenance. She took the curves on high speed and it required all of Curwood's alertness and agility with the steering wheel to negotiate them in safety at the end of the rope but he went sailing along like the trailer car on a cable train until Miss Astwood, seeing the warning sign of a railroad crossing looming up in the near distance, sharply slackened speed and caught him napping.

As the big touring car suddenly slowed down the trailer traveled blithely on at full speed, Curwood clinging to the wheel desperately as he saw the distance between the cars rapidly lessening. But even in that emergency his quick thought did not desert him. Reaching for levers and fumbling for brakes would be futile; instead he steered the car directly in the wide trail that Miss Astwood's machine had made in the dust and held it on the line until the tires of the front wheels caromed against the rear tires of the leading car in a startling but harmless collision.

Miss Astwood stopped her car and turned on the penitent Curwood indignantly.

"What's the matter?" she demanded. "Why didn't you slow down?"

"Excuse me," he said contritely, "I—I wasn't watching."

"Well, for goodness sake, keep your eyes open!" she exclaimed. "I don't want either of these cars smashed up."

"All right," he said, "I'll keep an eye out after this."

She started the cavalcade again with her customary vigorous thrust and thereafter no untoward incident marred their progress to the imposing Astwood garage at Lyle.

As they rode through the village Curwood observed that the heiress kept her gaze directed straight ahead and paid no heed to the curious glances that followed them. At the street crossings she sounded the siren with a curtness that bespoke her calm superiority to the mere pedestrians who might venture to obstruct her road, and she turned into the wide gateway of the Astwood estate with the swing of a professional driver.

At the garage she stepped out of the machine and turned to Curwood, who was laboriously climbing down.

"I am very much obliged to you," she said with more graciousness than she had hitherto exhibited. "If you will be good enough to unfasten the rope I won't take any more of your time. I will have one of the men take the car to the shop."

Curwood obediently undid the knots and stowed the rope in the

tool box. When he turned again to Miss Astwood she was holding something out to him. He took it mechanically and looked at it gravely. It was a five dollar bill.

"What am I to do with this?" he asked innocently.

"I think that ought to repay you for your time and the use of the car," the heiress said haughtily. Then she stopped suddenly and flushed as Curwood continued to examine the bank note with the same enigmatical smile.

"Oh, have I made a mistake?" she asked. "Perhaps—perhaps you own the car!"

"No," he said, extending the bill to her, "I don't own it—in fact I have no idea whose car it is. And I certainly am not entitled to all this for the slight service I did in steering your machine home."

"You don't know whose car it is?" she repeated blankly. "What do you mean?"

Their voices had carried to the Astwood mansion and a young man had emerged from a side entrance and was approaching them leisurely.

"Just what I say," Curwood replied genially, "I happened to be admiring the machine when you asked if you might use it. I said I had no objection and I really don't see why I should have. I had never seen the car until five minutes before you came along, Miss Astwood. And after that, you know, I merely did what you told me to do."

Miss Astwood, rosy and indignant, looked at the big automobile in dismay and drew back a step.

"Why, the idea!" she gasped, and at that moment they were hailed by the young man who had crossed the lawn.

"Hello, Bert!" he exclaimed. "What are you doing in Lyle? I didn't know you knew Mr. Curwood, sis!" he added, turning to Miss Astwood.

"I don't!" she declared with a haughty little toss of her chin.

Her brother looked from one to the other in surprise, his gaze lingering curiously on the five dollar bill which Curwood was still fingering.

"Mr. Curwood, this is my sister," he said gravely; "Lyda, this is the man I've told you about who takes down all the prizes at the motorcycle races—'The Speed Demon' the newspapers call him."

Curwood bowed, and Miss Astwood, despite her embarrassment, was forced to grant him a wavering smile as the absurdity of the situation overcame her usual hauteur.

"And now," young Astwood added with another glance at the bank

note, "if you'll settle up your financial differences maybe I can find out what this is all about."

"Why, it's perfectly dreadful!" his sister exclaimed. "I've taken somebody's car to tow me home and I don't know whose it is. I thought Mr. Curwood was—was—"

"I know I look like a chauffeur," Curwood said with a whimsical glance down at his professional looking raiment, "but what I don't know about automobiles would fill one of those five-foot book shelves. My motorcycle cast a shoe while I was tearing through Douglaston and I thought I'd look around the town while it was being patched up in a blacksmith shop. Miss Astwood needed a car to tow her home after a breakdown and when she asked me if she might use this one, I told her to go ahead and—here we are," he concluded with a grin and a little wave of both hands.

Astwood had been staring incredulously as he took in the details of the explanation. Then he threw back his head and howled.

"And you gave him a five dollar tip for being such an obliging chauffeur!" he exclaimed, turning to his pouting sister. "Well, that's a hit! As it happens, this car belongs to Billy Symes—he's only had it a week and he's probably got all the constables in the county looking for it by this time. I'll telephone him that it was my sister who stole it and I'll run it down to Douglaston after lunch. By the way," he added, "do you think we can bring the chauffeur in the front door to take lunch with us or will we have the cook fix him up a little snack in the butler's pantry?"

Miss Astwood was still crimson but her smile was permanent.

"Don't be a goose!" she said. "Come on, Mr. Curwood, I'll take back my gold, but at least you'll have luncheon with us, won't you?"

Curwood bowed profoundly.

"You know how good I am at obeying orders," he said, "and especially—yours." Miss Astwood took a step at his side.

"Nonsense!" she exclaimed, "I believe you're hungry!"

Winds of Chance.*

BY MARION SHORT.

AVE you found it yet, Mr. Herndon?"

"Found what, sonny?"

"Your satchel?" anxiously.

The graceful, dark-eyed youngster, playing a solitary game on the stone step below the author, checked the rolling of a runaway marble to look up at him.

Herndon gave a brief pull at the thick mop of ruddy hair.

"I haven't lost a satchel. Who said I had?"

"Papa. I heard him tell mama last night he saw you sitting out here most every day when he went to work, and he guessed you'd lost your grip. He said you looked like you had."

The man bit sharply at the stem of his pipe. For a moment a cloud of smoke hid his face. Then he gave a bitter little laugh.

"Your father hit the nail on the head. I hadn't owned up quite—even to myself—but—I have lost my grip, and it doesn't look as if I'd ever get it back."

"Chester! Chester!"

The boy's pretty young mother, leaning from the window of the old-fashioned frame house next to Herndon's boarding place, waved a beckoning arm.

"It's going to rain," she called, "and I want you to come in."

She nodded in a pleasant, off-hand way to Herndon. She and her husband had tried more than once to make advances to the grave, silent man, though it was evidently his desire to remain a courteous but persistent stranger. The mutual friendship that had sprung up between him and little Chester interested and pleased them, and of late Herndon's haggard face, indicating that he was ill or suffering, had called out a fresh impulse of neighborliness.

Herndon lifted his hat in formal answer to her salutation, and when the child had left him, sank into sombre revery. His thick-lashed gray eyes had curious green lights in them, and now they were dark as brooding storm-clouds.

* Copyright, 1913, by The Shortstory Publishing Company. Copyright secured in Great Britain. All rights reserved.

Presently he drew an open letter from his pocket and began a careful perusal, as if seeking to find some word of hope that might have escaped him in a previous reading.

"Your psychological novel is neither a scientific treatise, nor fiction as it is commonly understood. Somehow it curiously falls between the two," wrote the head of a prominent down-town publishing house. "It possesses neither the authority of the one, nor the illusion-creating qualities of the other. We see in this, as in the book manuscript you submitted a year ago, much to be commended, but must regretfully return this second effort also. We do not care to assume the risk of its publication. Of course we do not claim to be infallible, but in our judgment—"

Herndon's hand dropped, the page folding limply over his thumb. He wondered vaguely why he had intensified his despair by re-reading what was already so indelibly burned into his consciousness. Slowly he crumpled the letter back into his pocket.

The wind came down the street with wild swirls and weird shriekings. There were blowing fragments of newspaper swooping about in irregular circles. Two or three tin-cans became dislodged from an insecure perch on top of a waiting ash-receptacle at the pavement's edge, and rasped protestingly along the asphalt. A beggar-woman, her gray hair matted and stiff with dirt, drew a tattered shawl more closely about her warped body, and bent her head against the fighting elements.

Life seemed suddenly a hideous thing to Richard Herndon—hideous with grotesque winds of chance, with dissonant sounds, with ugly sights! It began to rain, but he kept his place on the stoop, unmindful.

A letter was thrust into his hand.

"Enjoying the weather?" the postman inquired, blinking as a spatter of hail smote his cheek.

Herndon was not even aware that a question had been put to him. The letter the postman delivered was from his sweetheart—Ruth Waring—Ruth, whose warm brown eyes he beheld in memory every time little Chester Granger looked up at him. It was the first word he had received from her in months!

He had promptly written releasing her from her engagement when his first novel had met with such utter rout, sternly resolving that their ways should lie apart until he proved himself a winner. Then had followed a second long year of grinding struggle, of ceaseless self-denial, and he had failed again! Hope died in his breast—it was the end!

Suddenly, while the storm raged about him, a clear picture came before him of his old home in a western state. It was May! Deep in the heart of a moonlit garden he stood with Ruth—she who was sweeter to him than the rain-wet lilacs that brushed his cheek as he bent for the farewell kiss. Always there was an evanescent something about her reminding him of springtime blossoms and the fragrance of the spring. She was so dear, so ineffably dear! He had clasped her sweet body, held it close—he remembered—he remembered! Together in the moonlight they dreamed—oh, God!—such dreams of their future life together!

With a groan his head fell forward on his breast. Past him stumbled a fellow boarder, knocking the pipe from his hand.

He longed unspeakably to see what Ruth had written, but if he opened the letter he might be tempted to answer—to cry out to her for sympathy from the depths into which he had fallen, and this his manhood forbade him to do. She must be left free to turn to some worthier man. He would treasure her letter as always, yes,—but treasure it unread!

Not long after he began a daily routine of work in the small, stuffy room he had occupied since coming to the city, mechanically putting together the semi-scientific pot-boilers which must serve to provide for his daily needs.

At the noon hour, Mrs. Orr, his landlady, knocked timidly at his door.

"Didn't quite finish in this room this morning. May I come in now?"

"Certainly."

She entered, and flecked the dust off a picture frame with a chamois skin always carried handily in her apron pocket.

"Too bad about little Chester, isn't it?"

He turned inquiringly.

"Too bad about him? What do you mean?"

His undoubted interest was a pleasant change from the settled apathy of his manner of late, and Mrs. Orr purposely delayed the telling of the news.

"Why, dear me! Hadn't you heard?"

"He isn't dead?"

"Oh, no, not so bad as that! But he's been sick ever since his ma left the city for California, a few days ago. Guess his pa has been just about scared out of his senses over him, from what I hear."

"I'll drop in and inquire how he is," said Herndon. He closed

his typewriter, and took his hat from its hook on the door. "I've noticed that he wasn't playing around the street as usual."

The child's father ushered Herndon into a cosy little parlor. He was a boyish-looking chap, shirt-sleeved, with disordered locks straggling over his forehead, and the tired eyes of a man who has passed sleepless nights.

"I'm glad you came," he informed the author with much cordiality. "He's a little better this last twelve hours, I'm glad to say. You're the only one in the neighborhood that he has asked to see. He was pretty delirious at first—kept talking about some baggage or other that you had lost. I couldn't get out of him quite what he meant, but perhaps you know."

The shadow of a smile crossed Herndon's countenance.

"Yes, I guess I know."

A boy's voice quavered from the next room.

"Who's that talking in there?"

The visitor stepped to his bedside.

"Hello! I'm glad it's you!" piped the invalid, joyously. "I wanted to go over and play jacks on your steps to-day, but the doctor said I couldn't." He raised himself on his elbow, his eyes unnaturally bright. "Have you found it yet?" he inquired eagerly in Herndon's ear.

His tall friend smoothed his pillow and gently laid him back.

"Not yet, my boy. But that's all right—don't worry."

Scattered about on the counterpane were scraps of paper covered with pencil marks. Granger began to clear them off.

"Chet wanted to draw some pictures before he went to Sleepy Town," he explained, "but it made his hand too tired."

He held up an old blank ledger with corners dented and frayed. "He wants this filled with a menagerie of wild beasts." He winked at the visitor, then spoke very solemnly. "My son and heir decided on his future profession this morning—behold the lion-tamer!"

The news was received as gravely as it was given.

"Well, Mr. Lion Tamer, I had ambitions to be an illustrator, when I was a boy, and if the doctor doesn't forbid—I'll draw you some animals fresh from the jungle to-morrow."

"I get a nurse for him in the morning," said Granger, as he went to the door with Herndon. "I'm obliged to go back to work or lose my book-keeping job. It's hard on a kid to be sick with his mother away—she had a telegram calling her to her father's bedside in California just before he was taken down."

As time went on, little Chester improved, but very slowly. The

doctor pronounced his illness only a slight attack of spinal-meningitis, but it left him very weak and indisposed to struggle for lost health.

Daily, Herndon sat by his bedside, sketching antic animals to please the boy. He wrote fantastic verses, describing what the animals said and did. He sang odd little jungle ditties, jotting down the improvised music roughly to keep the tunes in mind, especially those that appealed most strongly to the little fellow propped up on weary pillows.

Mrs. Orr wondered at the frequent and protracted absences of her most aristocratic boarder, but noticed that the typewriter sang with added speed whenever he did return for a time to his room.

"The picture I like best," said Chester one day, as he shuffled through the pages of the ledger, "is the one where the elefum reaches up with his trunk and gets a nut from the cocoa-nut palm for the poor sick bear. Will you draw something next that roars and swungs its tail?"

"A true likeness of Mr. Roaring Tiger when he tries to bluff the sick bear into giving up the cocoa-nut to him," consented the artist.

"And does he bluff him?" came the interested query.

"He does not—the jungle neighbors interfere."

"And did he swung his tail?"

"To and fro, but that's all the good it did him," and Herndon added a disgruntled tail to the tiger he was outlining in the middle of a fresh, white page.

"You are doing more than the nurse or myself to keep the youngster going," remarked rotund Dr. Graham one afternoon, perceiving that the entrance of the author had broken up a peevish crying spell on the part of the child. "I'm a great believer in happiness as a cure in these slow cases."

When the doctor took his leave, he left Herndon sitting on the side of the bed, gently chanting the song of the Mama Giraffe who wore the alphabet in a row down her long neck each morning to give the baby giraffes a chance to learn their letters.

The old ledger was almost filled by this time—animals, music, verse, rioting over the pages helter-skelter. The performances the animals went through revealed the varying stages of the child's illness. When they behaved with comparative decorum it marked his livelier days, but when the tired little spirit drooped unduly, the inhabitants of the jungle must needs indulge in their most extraordinary feats to entertain him.

Sometimes, when the boy dropped asleep, Herndon felt an almost unbearable tug at his heart-strings,—the long lashes, shadowing the pale cheeks, recalling poignant memories of Ruth, whose sweet eyes Chester's so strikingly resembled. It was that chance resemblance that had first attracted him to the child, of whom later he had become so fond.

"What makes you look at me so hard?" the little fellow asked, waking to find Herndon's intense gaze fixed upon him. "What do you see?"

"The eyes of a princess," came the low-spoken, tremulous reply, "and the eyes of her children, little dream-children who will never come true."

"The youngster may have his clothes on to-day," Doctor Graham announced one bright afternoon. "With his mother expected from California any minute, it's high time! I'm glad the ghostly little shaver is getting well at last!"

The boy, wrapped in shawls, was sitting in a rocking-chair, the ledger spread out on his lap.

"Can you sing what the bear sang to the elefum?" he inquired of the doctor. Then—proudly—"I can!" And he made a brave, if somewhat unsuccessful, attempt at the tune.

Shortly after, when Granger came in from work, the doctor questioned him, tapping a page of Chester's animal-book with his spectacle case. "Who, or rather what, is the man who concocted this extraordinary jumble? I've waited on purpose to ask you. Never until now did I happen to take a look at the stuff. What is the man's profession, did you say?"

Granger smiled.

"I didn't say." He lifted Chester, still clinging to his beloved book, into his lap. "What would you imagine?"

Doctor Graham adjusted his glasses and shuffled slowly and critically through the pages.

"He might be an artist—a musician—or a poet," he ventured, tentatively.

"He considers himself none of the things you mention," answered Graham, "but instead, a writer of psychological fiction. I've ventured to ask him a few questions of late. It wasn't easy. He's sensitive—reserved. He owns that his highbrow books have failed of a market—and he considered them his life-work. It's a case of a man's mistaking his calling, flunking on his job, and all that sort of thing. I like him for what he has meant to the kid here—too bad he's lost his grip!"

"And he never found it again," Chester observed, dreamily, but the interruption passed unnoticed.

The doctor stood up buttoning his gloves.

"What does he intend to do with this medley here?"

"Why, doctor, you don't really think it is of any value?"

"Don't I?" His emphatic fist banged the table. "Let me tell you that in my opinion the man is a positive genius. He only needs to have his eyes opened to the fact to put him on the highroad to success. I've a good mind to undertake the job myself."

"He lives right next door," Granger informed him, waking to a lively interest in the matter. "Why don't you go in and talk with him now?"

A quarter of an hour later, Granger saw the doctor climbing into his automobile, and crossed the sidewalk to question him.

"He's a mule!" declared that disgruntled individual. "He flatly refused to let me show the ledger to a publisher friend of mine—thought I was making game of him when I suggested it!"

He pulled the door of the car shut with a bang. "Of course it didn't help matters any," he added, "when he found out that the publisher I had in mind was the very one who had turned down the psychological soarings you told me about." He adjusted the clasp of his medicine case. "Well, so long, Mr. Granger! Guess I'll attend to my little pills and powders after this, and leave our genius brethren to their own making or unmaking."

When Richard Herndon's name was announced in the offices of Brand & Co., some ten days later, the head of the firm carefully placed in a drawer a manuscript he had been examining, and told the office boy to admit him.

Herndon was unable to understand why the publishers had sent for him. Mr. Brand was not a man of whims, and decidedly not one of uncertain judgment. He had as definitely ruled against the second novel as he had the first, and the author had no hope that he might ask its withdrawal from circulation among other possible publishers in order to reconsider it. Probably some hack-work would be offered him, he concluded, such as the editing of a more fortunate man's output.

Brand greeted him with a cautious cordiality that nettled at once the proud humility in which he had encased himself.

"Mr. Brand, you indicated that you had something to offer me. I have come with no illusions as to what that something may be. Whatever the commission, I am willing to undertake it, and to work hard."

Tilting back in his office chair, Brand regarded him with a level gaze. "It's not the hard work that counts most with us, Mr. Herndon, but the amount of heart, youth, spirit, enthusiasm, that a man puts into his work."

A smile both bitter and sorrowful curved the writer's lips.

"Then I'm afraid I'm the wrong party for the job. The desirable qualities you mention were sunk and lost in my unfortunate novels. The unremitting toil and sleepless nights I spent while they were in process, I might promise to duplicate, but nothing more."

"Unremitting toil and sleepless nights!" Brand repeated the words with an understanding nod. "Yes, they were painfully evident through all the pages—candle-smoke and aching nerves, but it is not of those novels that I wish to speak."

He leaned forward, his manner changing to one that was almost diffident.

"Mr. Herndon, I have now in my possession a book-manuscript I am anxious to publish before the holidays. I wish you to add certain touches to it here and there—superficial in reality, but technically necessary before publication is possible. If you will agree to undertake the work, I am willing to offer you very liberal terms."

"I am not in a position to decline it, Mr. Brand. But what special fitness have I shown that you should select me in preference to others? In your opinion everything I have written reeks of candle-smoke and aching nerves—"

"You are mistaken, sir," interrupted Brand, sharply.

Herndon stared at him agape. What could he mean?

With a wrench the publisher pulled open a drawer at his elbow, taking out something that bore to the onlooker a strangely familiar appearance.

"Why—what—" he gasped, and fell into a confusion that was almost pitiable. Spread out on the desk before the cold, keen eye of Brand, lay the old ledger, the corners crumpled and worn, which he had last beheld in the lap of young Chester Granger.

"Whoever called this nonsense to your attention did it without my consent, wish or will," he protested hotly, when he had recovered breath to do so. "It was never meant for public view. It was simply a labor of love—to make a sick child a little happier—"

"I know all about it," Brand interjected coolly, "Doctor Graham told me. The work you did on it was loving, fruitful play, not barren drudgery. You did not feel the weight of a message so huge that it crushed you beneath it, as in your novels, but you have expressed a message just the same for the heart and mind of the

universal child." The pages fluttered under his appreciative hand. "I believe that its combined features of art, music and verse, should make it something absolutely unique in the world of child literature. Will you edit it for publication?"

As Herndon set his signature to a contract, a sense of stupefaction crept over his brain. He had planned to build a stately mansion, classic in design, and of heavy masonry. He had become instead in some curious, miraculous manner, the builder of a light and airy playhouse for little children.

On a fair May morning of the following year, Herndon arrived at his old home in Western Iowa. With the advent of success there had arisen within him an inordinate longing to see Ruth Waring's face once more.

The illustrated, musical nursery-book had made an instantaneous hit, as Brand had foreseen. Herndon was already at work on another one to follow.

Ruth's father had died the year before, and, to the astonishment of the entire community where he had been so solidly prosperous all his days, died poor. Ruth, delicately reared, always petted and indulged as the only child of wealthy parents, was earning her living teaching school. Herndon was soon in possession of all the drab particulars of her monotonous existence.

Would she—could she—forgive his arbitrary wiping out of the sacred bond that had existed between them, and his long and stubborn silence thereafter? Ruth was proud, and he had shown that pride no mercy.

For an hour before closing time he paced up and down the street opposite the schoolhouse.

Presently the children came rushing forth, singly, and in droves. More sedately, their teachers followed. Last of all, Ruth's slender black-robed figure appeared at the door.

Herdon crossed the street to the gate, but without a word or a glance his former sweetheart hurried past him.

"Ruth!" he cried, appealingly.

She paused, startled, and turning raised her veil.

"Ruth!"

The man's voice faltered. She was not the rosy, smiling girl he had left behind him three years before. Her eyes, brown as autumn leaves with the sun shining through them, were the same, but her face was drawn and pale, wearing the starved look of one who has put youth and its dreams behind her. The change in her appearance stabbed him.

Tumultuously he began the recital of those long, vain struggles for success; how defeat, followed by defeat, had seemed his persistent destiny until—at last—the miracle!

Finally it came to him that Ruth was listening but without interest. A cold fear gripped him.

"Ruth, aren't you glad to see me, to know what has kept me away? Tell me the truth—have I lost you? Is this the end of it all?"

They had come to a sheltered place along the roadside and he gently detained her.

"What is the matter, dear?" he entreated.

A bird trilled long in the branches overhead; then there was silence; then Ruth spoke.

"Nothing, Richard, except that I have suffered so much since you—seemed to forget—since dad left me—that I—well, I don't seem able to believe that anything good can come to me. I guess, Richard, to tell the truth, I've sort of—lost my grip!"

He caught his breath quiveringly, between set teeth.

"That's what they said of me—that I had lost my grip—and I had. But I have it back again, Ruth, and something more—you—and intend to cling to both while life shall last."

For a moment longer Ruth stood rigid, proud, unyielding, then limply she sank into his arms, bursting into pitiful sobs.

The bird above their heads, all unheeding, chirped softly, happily; and when at last Herndon's sweetheart, quieted, looked up at him, he saw in her eyes the smile that used to be.

The Beggar of Montierre*

BY FRANCIS LEE ROGERS

(The author does not attempt to reproduce the idiosyncrasies of the miller's speech, which are difficult to set forth in translation.)

IT was New Year's eve. Back a distance from the country road was an old mill; and not far from it a cottage, whose small-paned window glowed cheerfully. Within sat a picturesque group: Pere Levain, the jovial miller of Montierre, smoking his pipe; madame his wife, buxom after the fashion of country-bred matrons; Paul, their boy of twelve years, nibbling an apple; the guest, an erect, pleasant-faced man of thirty-five, in traveling garb; and Jaqueline, slight and bent, who looked to be a thousand years old. Her eyes, fastened on the flames in the big fireplace, absorbed their brightness and reflected none; her features were like wrinkled parchment; and she was dressed all in black, except for a white knitted cap that she wore.

The guest looked at his watch. "In an hour it will be the New Year," he said.

"Thank God, we have not heard *it* yet," remarked the miller, half to himself.

"And may I ask what *it* may be?" queried the guest.

The miller caught the eye of his wife, and paused.

"There are some things—," he commenced.

His words were halted by a strange cry from outside, that came, long drawn out and harrowing, from somewhere in the distance. The effect upon the little group was startling. The miller paled, and his wife appeared much agitated. Little Paul stared with wide eyes at Jaqueline, who, suddenly roused from her stupor, had risen to her feet and stood looking out through the window at the wooded outlines of the hills, which loomed forbiddingly in the moonlight. With arms outstretched and trembling, she uttered some quavering words that could not be understood and then sank down in her chair, and with her face in her hands began to sob convulsively. The miller's wife came over to the old woman, and with caresses and whispered

* Copyright, 1913, by The Shortstory Publishing Company. Copyright secured in Great Britain. All rights reserved.

words at length calmed her, and then led her from the room.

"Listen!" exclaimed the host, when they were alone. "Did you not hear it again?"

The guest assented, through courtesy, though he had noticed nothing, and then remarked:

"I have heard the cry of wolves before, in Canada and in Russia. I do not mind the sound, though it is, I admit, not cheerful. But do you fear it so greatly, here safe by your fireside?"

"Ah, but this wolf that cries of a New Year's eve is no wolf at all," exclaimed the miller. "It is something much worse! You wonder at the scene you have just witnessed. Hark! The bells of the church are tolling the old year out now, just as they did that night thirty years ago. Poor Jaqueline!"

"I would like very much to know her history," suggested the guest, "if my curiosity does not intrude upon personal affairs."

The miller relighted his pipe. "I will tell you something of it," he said slowly, "but it is a story such as you may doubt, you Americans. We of France know of many such; and they are all true. I remember the happening, which was thirty years ago, as clearly as if it were of yesterday. It was in December of that year that a strange character made his appearance in the region of Montierre. He was a tall, stooped man, narrow-faced, with matted, tawny hair, upon which rested an old brown hat, loosely, as if it did not belong there. His dirty, sinewy hands bore nails that had not been trimmed for many weeks; and you may well imagine that those who met him once did not care to meet him again.

"But the beggar, for such was his profession, did not seek society of others. Indeed, he was never known to speak a word to anyone; to those bold ones who ventured to ask him his name, or where he lived, he made no reply, except for a wave of his hand toward the hills, and a smile that showed his teeth too much. Where he stayed none could discover; he was only seen, now and then, at houses on the outskirts of town, where he came to beg for food, which none dared to refuse him. At one of such visits he came to the house of old Levanche, who got a look into the round, glaring eyes of the beggar. The old man straightway made the sign of the Cross, at which the beggar turned and fled, without once looking back. Whereupon Levanche declared openly that the beggar was no man at all, but the Devil himself, and here for no good purpose.

"One day the son of the *maire*, Arno by name, was in the hills hunting deer, and he came to a little cave, in front of which was lying

the beggar's coat. He looked inside the cave, and there he saw, not the beggar, but a great, tawny wolf with bristling hair, crouched ready for a spring, and glaring with red eyes that were exactly those of the beggar. The youth, frightened out of his wits, dropped his rifle and took to his heels, and never paused until he was safe within the town.

"After this incident there arose rumors that the beggar was not only capable of making himself a beast, but was capable of working magic upon others. And there were circumstances to prove this. For instance, Pierre Benoine, passing the man on the road, the next day fell a-sick of a fever; and he could think of no other cause for it except that. And there were some householders who had refused the beggar food or given him only crusts; they found that their horses became crippled, their cows ceased giving milk, or some other evil befell them.

"Now, Jaqueline at this time was a handsome matron of thirty. Her husband, Jean, was a woodchopper; and they lived in a cottage a little way out of town. They had a son of fifteen, Eugene, who was a fair youth, and already able to be of much assistance to his father. The beggar had never been to their cottage, in spite of the fact that it was situated close to the wooded hills where he was reputed to stay.

"On the morning of the thirty-first of December, the sun being already well up, Jean and his son, ready for their work, were about to start out, and Jaqueline had just come to the door bringing them their lunches. Jean kissed her good-bye, and said:

"'A pleasant day to you, my Jaqueline, and may the beggar not come near!'

"'What makes you speak of *him?*' she asked, surprised. 'If he comes, he shall get nothing. Let him work for his food, as my husband does, if he would live!'

"Jaqueline watched the two as they walked away, and strove to shake off an unpleasant foreboding by planning how she should surprise Jean and Eugene with sundry choice dishes at the morrow's dinner. Strange it is, how women divine coming events; perhaps, as old Levanche used to say, they are all in league with the Devil! But that was an ungallant saying, and untrue. However, the gleam of Jean's axe had scarcely vanished in amongst the trees, when she saw coming down the road a figure that she recognized at a glance. It was the beggar. He reached their gate, paused a moment, and entered, approaching the house with a long, oddly-hesitating stride;

and then he stood before her, and with a claw-like hand doffed the old brown hat that lay on his head, revealing tawny, long hair, coarse as an animal's. He made a gesture toward his mouth revealing marvelously white teeth as he did so, and held out an upturned hand. Jaqueline stamped her foot, and pointed to the road.

"'Go!' she cried. 'My husband labors for his bread and you shall have none of it!'

"The beggar stood there for a moment, then, with an inarticulate sound and a glance that made Jaqueline tremble in spite of herself, he turned down the path, moving rapidly with his peculiar, long stride. After the beggar had disappeared up the road, she saw that the old, brown hat lay upon the ground where he had stood; and though this was a most inconsequent trifle, somehow she felt that it had a sinister meaning. But the beggar, at any rate, was gone. It were foolishness to think of him any more; so she went into the house and began singing to drive away the heaviness of her heart.

"In the afternoon, an hour before she had expected her husband, she saw him coming across from the woods, alone. Anxiously she stood at the door to greet him. He walked up the path with bowed head and a manner that told of bad tidings. When he was near, she called to him: 'Where is Eugene?'

Jean had now come up to the hat that lay upon the ground.

"'What is this?' he asked in a dull tone, not heeding her question.

"'That is the beggar's hat,' she replied, a sudden fear striking to her heart. 'But where is Eugene?'

"'The beggar—he was here?' said Jean.

"'Yes. But tell me—where is Eugene?' she cried, with terror at her husband's manner. Jean walked up beside her before he replied.

"'God pity us,' he said, 'he has disappeared. And that is all I know.'

"'Is he dead?' she almost screamed, swaying as though she were about to fall.

"'Be calm,' said Jean, 'perhaps he is even living. I will tell you the little there is to tell. We worked a little way apart to-day, and this afternoon, having for some time not heard the sound of his axe, I hallooed to him. There was no response, though I thought I heard some sort of a cry. Hastening over to the little clearing where he had been, I saw—no trace of Eugene, but something utterly unlooked for: two large wolves, that silently trotted away together into the brush and vanished. I looked about in every direction from the

spot. There was no sign of blood, or of any struggle. Far through the woods I went, calling the boy by name. My search was fruitless.'

"'It was, perhaps, witchcraft,' moaned Jaqueline, 'perhaps the revenge of the beggar! He is a devil, they say, and can take the form of a wolf. He, and a fellow in like guise, have murdered our Eugene and dragged him away to some secret place!' She sank on her knees, overcome by weeping.

"'I shall not sleep till I have killed those two wolves,' said Jean; and walking into the room, he took his rifle from its place in the corner, and set about loading it.

"'You are not going back into the woods now?' protested Jaqueline, in a frenzy of fear. 'It is almost night. Oh, do not! Tomorrow you can find and kill them. If you go now, I will never see you again. I feel it! Oh, do not go! Do not go!'

"Jean picked up the heavy rifle and patted it.

"'It is the wolves who have to fear, not I,' he said. 'The full moon will soon be bright, and I am not one to miss in even a dim light. Besides, our boy may be alive, wandered off by some strange chance. Consider, I saw no sign that he was killed. He must be alive, somewhere, and I shall find him, and bring him back to you!'

"Jaqueline was almost convinced by her husband's hopeful words, but as he started out through the doorway, all her foreboding came back.

"'Ah, do not go!' she moaned, in a voice full of such entreaty and sadness that Jean could make no reply to it, except to wave his hand in farewell, and stride away.

"Now Jaqueline was alone. For a time, to keep her mind occupied, she busied herself with half-hearted preparations for the next day. But in a little time she was at the door, listening, hoping to catch the sound of returning footsteps. But her hopes were in vain.

"The hours dragged on. She gazed out at the landscape, peaceful and bright in the moonlight, except the hills, that loomed sombre and forbidding against the sky.

"Suddenly she heard the echo of a shot from the distance. With beating heart, she listened tensely to hear if there should be another. There was none. But in a little while there sounded the terrible, lingering howl of a wolf, and her heart froze with terror. Each minute of suspense now seemed a torturous eternity. A thousand hideous imaginations filled her brain. What if the shot had failed? If, even now, a terrible animal were tearing at the body of her hus-

band? She stopped her ears, fancying from time to time that she heard the awful cry repeated. And then she would go to the door and listen with all the eagerness of hope, and imagine that she heard footsteps in the distance. Thus the interminable minutes dragged into hours.

"All at once the silence was again broken, this time by the chiming of bells from the town. Her neighbors were rejoicing at the New Year! The cheerful sound broke in upon her terror, and roused her to action. She must seek help! The nearest house was a good distance down the road, but fear lent her swiftness, and she soon reached it. The house was that of old Levanche. He had invited many guests that night, for the festivities. I was there, and many of my friends; and truly we had spent a merry evening. Jaqueline burst into our midst, pale and unkempt.

"'The wolves!' she cried. 'They have taken Eugene—and Jean, he has not returned.'

"As soon as she was able to talk more connectedly, and the men had gathered the situation, they armed themselves with weapons such as were at hand, and with torches the party sallied forth up the road. It did not take them long to reach the woods at the point where Jean had entered them. The little group now scattered out amongst the trees, though they kept in sight of one another's torches. Jaqueline was the only woman in the party, and none of the searchers was so active and tireless as she.

"An hour before dawn they found Jean and his son. The boy was lying dead, a bullet mark in his white forehead. Jean, close by, though terribly torn at the throat and shoulders, was yet living, and, before he sank back into the unconsciousness which was his last, was able to tell what had happened.

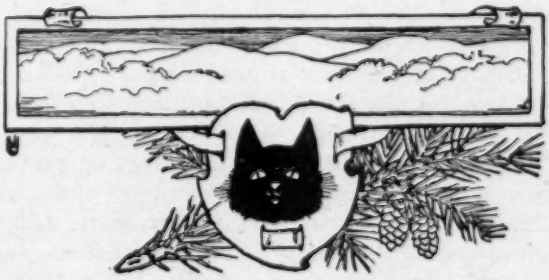
"He had come upon two wolves, the same that he had seen that day, and had fired straight at the foremost, which was running toward him. The bullet went true, and the animal fell. But as he looked, he saw a horrible, an incredible thing. It was the body, not of a dead wolf, but of his own son, that lay before him! Throwing himself beside it, in a madness of grief, he forgot the other wolf, when suddenly he felt his shoulder pierced as by a hundred wrenching knives. The next second he lay prostrate, while over him stood a great, hairy beast, glaring at him with red eyes that shone with a devilish intelligence.

"Weakened as he was by loss of blood, he struck at the huge wolf with his bare fists, and then it leaped at him and tore him afresh with

its fangs, until he was no longer able to stir. Then it surveyed him, and with its fore-paws on his chest, gave a long howl of triumph, the sound which Jaqueline had heard.

"The New Year's party made their way slowly back to the house with their tragic burdens. Jaqueline had to be led, for she was helpless. The shock of the terrible sight had snapped a cord in her mind somewhere, and she was no longer conscious of her surroundings.

"Such she has remained to this day; except that now and then something will awaken memory for a brief minute, even as tonight. She and Jean had been our good friends, and that is why she is here, our guest for these many years. She is always quiet, living as in a dream, and perhaps a wondrous dream, if we could know it! And now you have heard this story, you know, monsieur, why it is that we of Montierre do not like to hear the howl of a wolf, especially on a New Year's eve."



A Blare of Trumpets.*

BY FLORENCE SEYLER THOMPSON.

THE only romantic thing that had ever happened to June in all her twenty-six years, was her name; and even that came to be a mockery.

When Emmett Rose brought his bride from Pennsylvania to Tannery Town, not even her love for her young husband kept back the little gasp of dismay at first glimpse of her new home. It was dreary beyond belief, and with the intolerable odor of green hides to be breathed for the rest of her life.

When the baby came it was June time and the wife said a bit wistfully, "Do you mind Emmett, how the roses bloomed at this time, a year ago, in Conshohocken? Let's call the baby June, it sounds pretty, don't you think—June Rose?" And Emmett Rose remembering the wide, tree-shaded street, and his wife's vine-covered home, had an inspiration himself.

"She'll be a white June Rose then; she's not red and wrinkled like most youngsters are—do you mind the bride rose near the gate, Mollie? We'll name her for that."

It was the one time that they gave themselves over to sentiment, for the babies came so fast after that that plain Ellen and Maggie and Nathan and Martin and Kate sufficed very well. And June grew up as fair and delicate as her lovely name—like a lily in a marsh, for never was environment more hopeless than Tannery Town, and particularly, Tannery Road, where they lived. Other people became used to the odor of raw, green hides in the process of tanning and forgot that it was—June never forgot it for a moment. She loathed it, and longed for the day when she could leave it all. And one day she sensed with something of a shock, that her white loveliness was something that did not appeal to the Tannery youths; for they passed her by for the more flaming roses, as it were. Ellen and Maggie were brown-eyed and red-cheeked and black-haired—and they were carried triumphantly off.

And in June's gray-blue eyes with their black lashes, was a wistful

* Copyright, 1913, by The Shortstory Publishing Company. Copyright secured in Great Britain. All rights reserved.

look—a hungering for her own romance that seemed somehow so long in coming. June did not know that in the heart of every woman—the fattest, the leanest, the grayest, the most austere—the withered remains of a secret dream may be found. The dream of "his" coming as "warriors come"—on a foam-flecked charger, to seize her and carry her away. It is not in the heart of any maid to withstand a wooing by capture; but June thought she was different from other women, and was accordingly ashamed.

At twenty, she had thought her romance, such as it was, was coming. Philip Chalmers had strolled down Tannery Road a few times and hung over the gate in passing. June knew Philip was "different" somehow than the Tannery boys; he had ambitions, he talked to her about making a name for himself; he intimated largely and vaguely that there was no "future" in Tannery Town, and she was profoundly impressed, and presently she found herself looking expectantly up the road at half past seven o'clock, her heart beating high. But even in the first flutter of her dawning consciousness of love, there was a half defined ache of disappointment; the palpitating romance she had dreamed of was to end in a wooing at the gate in the most commonplace way, after all.

And then one night when a copper moon was shining down on Tannery Town, Philip came swiftly and excitedly, as she waited at the gate. He was going away that very night, he explained—out west; the chance had come but two hours before, and it was now or never with him; he was going to be a cow puncher—didn't sound like a career of course, but you'd better believe there was a big opportunity in Wyoming, learn something about cattle first; then get a herd together—why, he'd be a rich man in a few years.

Plainly the lust of ambition beat in his pulses; he had forgotten the girl. June played no part in his scheme of things; it was youth at high tide going out to conquer. June saw, and her heart was like to break. The romance that had not come up to her expectations was now the sweetest thing in the world to her.

They shook hands, and June wished him good luck—there had never been any love spoken between them—and Philip turned to go. And maybe because a shadow of the girl's pain looked out of her blue eyes, or because the moon works its madness as impartially in Tannery Town as where the magnolias grow, he turned back again.

"Maybe if I strike it rich out there, and you haven't fallen in love with somebody, maybe you'd go back with me to Wyoming, some day, June-rose."

It was said lightly and awkwardly, but sincerely enough, at the

moment. And then June answered just as lightly, "Maybe."

That was all. Nobody but June knew how she came to live on those words, and nobody but June could have told just when the hope died out of her heart. For the gray days passed, and no word ever came out of the west. She hated her name now—it seemed a mockery, for she had come to be twenty-six. Never once had she known a palpitating moment; she was as colorless as her surroundings, coming and going her unobtrusive way. People spoke of her sister Ellen who had moved to Chicago, as having done well for herself, but they accepted June as they did the raw, green hides—they forgot about her. And into this grayness and bleakness one day came a letter with a Wyoming postmark.

"My June-rose:—

I'm not at all sure that you are my June-rose, though God knows I want you, and I'm asking you to be. I know you are nobody else's for I saw Jack Murray from Tannery Town this morning, and he tells me you are unmarried. Deep down in my heart I have always cared for you—there was a terrible ache in my heart the night I said goodbye to you; I can see that copper moon shining down over Tannery Town this minute; but when I got out here I saw that I wa- up against it good and plenty. Making a fortune out West isn't what it is said to be, believe me. I was prouder than Lucifer. I made up my mind I'd make good if it took a life time; and I've done it too, but somehow the years got away before I knew it. And this terrible, beautiful fever of getting rich burned in my veins—and Tannery Town and the girl I loved got dimmer and dimmer before my eyes. Finally I said to myself, "June-rose has forgotten me and married somebody who's mighty lucky to get her. And today I met Jack Murray; I could hardly talk civilly to him I was so eager to hear about you. It all came back with a rush—that life back home, and I knew I could never be satisfied again; that I simply must have you—that this restlessness I've known for two years was my long'ng for you. Maybe you've forgotten me, my white June-rose; my first impulse was to wire and ask you—but I didn't dare. I'm coming East in June—once when you were twenty and I was twenty-one, I asked you if you would come back to Wyoming with me, and you said "maybe." Will you June-rose? Don't write; telegraph—I can't wait.

Philip."

And so June lived in her romance again. She dreamed of the hour when she would leave Tannery Town at last; for one splendid hour she would step out of the gray perspective in which she had lived for twenty-six years, and walk in the limelight, the central figure. Every starved nerve thrilled with delight. Girlishly, childishly even, she planned her wedding. It must be in church of course, and there would be a white gown and a veil—but presently she relinquished these. Father and mother who had forgotten the wide tree-shaded street in the old home and the bride roses by the gate, thought it a useless extravagance. June would better wear a dress she could travel in—and what use would she have for a wedding dress in Wyoming among those rough cowboys, anyway.

June made her traveling dress herself, and fashioned her own hat, a big, black hat covered with filmy tulle and wreathed with white roses. The rest of it—the service in the church and wedding breakfast afterward, her parents magnificently conceded. And on the very morning of the day before the wedding, a night message came:

"Impossible for me to come to Tannery Town for wedding. Meet me in Chicago on Wednesday morning. Have wired your sister to make arrangements. Am putting through tremendous cattle deal which will keep me busy to the very hour of the wedding. We will leave on the one-five train for Cheyenne. Don't fail me, June-rose.

Philip."

And June did not fail her lover. But if in her heart was a crushing sense of disappointment, who shall blame her? The one and only time in her life when Tannery Town might see her as an individual with a romance—she must slip out as unobtrusively as she had lived. She had set her heart on having them say: "Ah, there was a pretty wedding, when June Rose married Philip Chalmers; he came all the way from Wyoming to get her."

Now should it occur to anyone to speak of her, Tannery Town would lift its surprised eyebrows and say vaguely, "June Rose—did you say June? Oh yes, she finally married and went away."

Arrived at her sister's she gave a pitying thought to her. Was it possible that Ellen had had to endure this horrible environment for four years of her married life? For Ellen lived back of the "Yards." Tom Melcher had a good job in the shipping-room of one of the big plants. But Ellen, strange to say, minded the stockyards not at all; she had grown used to them as everybody in Tannery Town forgot the odor of raw hides. June gave long consideration to the ironical fate that had compelled this prosaic background for her wedding.

Everything had been arranged by wire. It was utterly impossible for June to realize what Philip had meant when he said he had "made good." Material considerations never once entered her head. She knew she loved Philip, and she was going to leave Tannery Town—the other dreams she had sorrowfully to give up. She was not even to see Philip till the last minute—suppose he were disappointed in her; she was panic-stricken; was she not very much older, she reflected anxiously, peering into the glass. Of her own affection she had no doubt whatever; always the vision came to her of the eager, arrogant, handsome boy leaning over the gate that night the moon shone over Tannery Town. But it was all so different, so disillusioning, she told herself wistfully. She longed with all her

girlish heart for a blare of trumpets, for just one crowded hour, a touch of romance in her life.

They were to be married at St. John's Church, ten squares away. Philip had been sure June would want a quiet wedding; no fuss or feathers—the quieter and simpler, the better; it would suit him right down to the ground. He would arrive at the hour when they were to start from the house to the church; no wedding-breakfast afterward—they'd make for the Rock Island and have lunch on the diner.

The only thing that eased a little that curious lump in June's throat was that Philip had sent up an immense bridal bouquet of white roses. "No one on earth has so perfect a right to wear these as my June-rose," was the message that came with them. Somehow this reassured the wistful bride. It had begun to seem to her as if her marriage was merely incidental to Philip—nothing that was of any consequence; the cattle deal came first. She was childishly delighted to know that they were to ride to the church in an automobile; it will perhaps better explain June to say that she was almost as excited over the automobile as the wedding.

Meanwhile June's lover was tremendously excited himself, and it would have comforted June to know how he loathed the necessity that had arisen suddenly and unexpectedly of putting through this deal. June was as yet unaware that her lover was the shrewdest cattleman the Oakley-Phelps Company boasted, and a peremptory telegram had brought about a postponement of his own plans at the last moment. But in an unguarded moment he had blurted out the news of his coming happiness to Larry Keefe.

Philip was blissfully unconscious that Larry on the instant proceeded to make himself very busy communicating the news to two hundred other cow punchers who happened to be in the city and about the "Yards" that day. They agreed with beautiful unanimity that the proper thing to do was to show dear old Phil a good time.

June's first glimpse of Philip when he came swiftly into the house holding out his arms, was another shock. Was this the eager, arrogant, handsome boy who had impressed her with his large, vague talk about making a name for himself—this man, good-looking to be sure, but oh, so much older and quieter, and with absolutely nothing dashing about him. Gone with a crash was the last forlorn dream of a foam-flecked charger, and a gallant lover sweeping down from it just long enough to seize her and ride away with her into the night. But with his arms around her and his tender voice—"My June-rose at last"—she felt ineffably content. What did it matter after all—the blare of trumpets she had longed for? It was just the

protest of her heart against all the long, gray days of her love-starved youth.

Contentedly she leaned against the wine-colored cushions of the big car, its top thrown back. "Just think, I never rode in an automobile before," she whispered happily.

As they whirled around the corner, only a square from her sister's house, the bridegroom's eyes bulged in amazement—June was as yet utterly uncomprehending—for two hundred cow punchers, resplendent in chaps and sombreros, and with knives and pistols in their belts, swooped down upon them, intent upon their benevolent purpose of showing Phil a good time.

Philip slipped his arm protectingly around June's waist—"Don't get nervous," he whispered, somewhat nervous himself—"it's a little way the boys have of celebrating our wedding."

In June's heart as yet was room for nothing but astonishment. As the picturesque cavalcade wheeled into line in front of the automobile, there was a sudden burst of music—a mounted band was in the lead and the lilting, haunting strains of an old but popular air made June's pulses lift—

"Won't you be my sweetheart—I'm—in—love with you—"

All during the ride to the church she was divided between terror and delight; and it was a half frightened girl who walked alone up the bridal path the cowboys made for her, their sombreros held at their chests. She passed, a slightly old-fashioned but lovely figure in her gray dress, its tunic caught up with a long steel buckle; on her head a black, rose-wreathed hat of lace and carrying the immense bouquet of bride roses in her arms.

June was entirely ignorant that the man at the right as she stepped out of the automobile was a moving picture man, and that she was at that moment being immortalized for millions of people to see; she had never seen a moving picture—Tannery Town having not yet reached that stage of cosmopolitanism. Nor did she know that a cowboy wedding was the most unique thing blasé Chicago had had to stir its pulse in many a month.

When June came out of the church on her husband's arm, the terror that had been as much wonder, became the latter thing exclusively. What had happened to cause all this excitement, this congestion? The band was still playing, but there were thousands upon thousands of people crowded into the area of two squares.

The surface cars had stopped, and traffic was impeded. Policemen, a score of them, were forcing back the eager crowds—but

everybody, policement and all, wore a smile, and fervent "God bless ye's" reached her over and over again. Women smiled at her, men took off their hats at her approach—it was all most respectful and kindly. She clutched tightly her husband's arm; she caught a half smile on his lips and a deprecating, "The boys mean well," and suddenly she understood. It was the blare of trumpets, her crowded hour, her romance at last. She had stepped out of a gray perspective—the terror and the wonder went out of her face, and a childish joy swept over her. She smiled half tremulously, but girlishly, and that smile went straight to the heart of the mob, which cheered itself hoarse with enthusiasm.

The next twenty minutes went with a rush—the automobile swung through the lane the opening crowd made, the band leading, and the cowboys riding alongside to lean over to shake hands with the bridegroom, and to beg a flower from the bride. June rose to the occasion and the custom, and gave roses generously.

She had forgotten that it was the cowboys' privilege to kiss the bride but they hadn't, nor had Philip. He nodded to the chauffeur to speed up a little; it was impossible to go fast, as they were still threading through the traffic—but the machine shot forward.

This was what the cow punchers wanted. One by one, two hundred of them, they attempted it—and some thirty of them succeeded—riding full speed alongside the automobile, and kissing the bride triumphantly, as they swooped down and past.

June's pulses were throbbing—pure joy held her speechless—this was ten thousand times more picturesque than the coal-black, foam-flecked charger; but evidently Philip didn't think so. He glanced at her flushed face, leaned forward, and slipped something into the chauffeur's hand. "Make it a getaway," he said tersely, "the boys have had enough horse play."

The car leaped out into a clear space—and June felt herself holding on for dear life—and heard Larry Keefe emit one long, triumphant yell. Those behind him saw him tug at his saddle horn;—and the rough riders trailing in the rear, but on a dead run, a half mile down, whooped as Larry rose in his stirrups and swirling his lariat—lassoed the bridegroom.

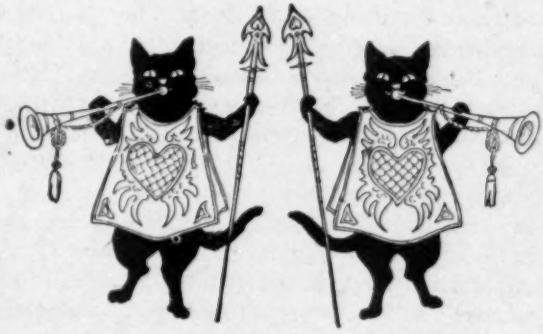
"No use!" shouted Philip to the driver; he was smiling half grimly. The chauffeur "killed" his engine and put on the brakes—it happened like lightning after that. The bridegroom was hauled out of the car by the triumphant cowboys, and put on a broncho. Philip knew when to submit; he rode more or less smilingly beside the car, while Larry occupied the post of honor beside the bride. June was

laughing—spontaneously and girlishly. She was beautiful to behold, with a faint blush on her white cheeks.

Later, from the Rock Island Express, she leaned out of the window, her eyes misty as she smiled and waved her handkerchief to two hundred rough riders as they swung their sombreros. The band was playing the old favorite again: "Let me call you sweetheart—I'm in love with you." The passengers were smiling—the whole world was kind to June today.

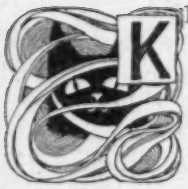
Philip, when the city had been left behind, held her hand tightly in his. "How brave you were my June-rose; I know you must have planned for a quiet wedding, no fuss or excitement; and then to have all this distasteful publicity—why, all Chicago will be discussing you over their dinner tables tonight—it must have been an ordeal, and I am utterly remorseful."

June put her soft palm against his browned cheek. "An ordeal, Philip?" She closed her eyes ecstatically for an instant—"Why dear, I—I—simply loved it."



Passed By*

BY LOWELL EDWIN HARDY



ENO Bar lies in a little pocket in the Sierras, on the edge of Bear River, where Moody's Ridge and the rocky slope of Lowell Hill Divide come together. At night, from the top of the grade coming in on the old stage road from Red Dog, the weary traveler can see far below him the cluster of its lights beckoning him on to warmth and cheer.

In days gone by Keno Bar, surrounded by rich 'diggings' and conveniently located for travel, was the most prosperous mining camp in California. Its hotels and business places were crowded, and the double row of saloons, gambling-houses and dance-halls that stretched the length of Main street, from Ferguson's Opera House down to the Fashion Stables, with its black-and-white checkerboard front, at the lower end of the steep, rocky thoroughfare, were open day and night. The sound of the piano, the whirl of the wheel and the rattle of dice were unceasing.

But this was long ago. Keno Bar is dead. The changes of fortune that come to mining camps in the end left the town deserted and forsaken, its prosperity gone forever. The abandoned shafts, washed-out placers and rotting sluice-boxes stand unworked and untended. The empty houses and stores are falling down, crushed by the snow that has measured fifteen feet in the middle of a hard winter, and the few saloons and one hotel still remaining drag out a precarious and waning existence.

This was a Saturday night and Main street was deserted. A half dozen miners in from their claims over on the American and some few freighters on their way across the summit, staying the night in town, made up the roisterers. It was raining, a cold, sleety drizzle that would turn to snow by morning, and all were indoors. From the New Orleans Saloon and Jim Dunn's place farther up the street came the slam of poker-chips on tables, the scraping of chairs and heavily-booted feet, and an occasional rough voice singing.

There was but one figure on the street. It was of a man who had

* Copyright, 1913, by The Shortstory Publishing Company. Copyright secured in Great Britain. All rights reserved.

halted just outside the dim circle of illumination that radiated from the window of the Pioneer Drug Store on the corner. He stood listening for some minutes to the sounds of revelry, then, casting a quick glance down each side of the street, drew his coat collar closer about his neck, pulled the brim of his hat farther down over his eyes, and struck out toward the lower end of town. He walked as though shunning observation, keeping to the middle of the street and avoiding the patches of yellow light that were thrown across the narrow way by the kerosene lamps hung from the ceilings of the saloons.

Beyond these, on each side, rows of blank-faced deserted stores and buildings gave the place an atmosphere of death and ghostly desolation. His footsteps sounded and resounded between them, and he glanced curiously at these vacant, staring fronts as he passed, looking upon them with a reminiscent air. But it was only when he found himself beneath the bridge over the street, connecting the two wings of the old Golden Eagle Hotel, that he slackened his pace. Staring up at the old building, his gaze rested for a time upon the corner suite of the first-floor front that had once been the pride of the famous hostelry.

He passed on. At the lower end of the street he turned sharply to the left and stumbled down a narrow lane. Ahead was a light. He bent his head to the drizzle and walked steadily toward it. He was now past all chance of meeting any one who would identify him.

There was but one cabin in the gulch below. It was that of "Old Kate," outcast of the town. But for the single light in the window the lane was in darkness. As he came nearer he slackened his pace and halted at the gate.

Above him, across the gulch at the top of the hill, another lamp burned from a room in the rear of the big, ornate residence of Jim Toland, the banker and mine owner of the town, where the caretaker lived alone keeping watch over the property since the family had moved to San Francisco. The man before the little cabin stood silent for a minute or two gazing up at the light, then turned suddenly and opened the gate.

His knock on the thin door startled him with its loudness. From within came a hurried shuffling of feet. The knob turned and the door opened. A woman, her lean, bent figure draped in a cheap calico dress, with a dingy shawl drawn over her shoulders, stood back from the threshold with a lamp held high above her head. The fingers that held the lamp were stiff and knotted. The hair, thin and

streaked, was drawn back from her face that, despite the marks that age and dissipation had both left there, still held in dim outline traces of comeliness. She strained forward, and the cords in her neck stood out as she peered into the dark.

"Who's there?" she queried, in a voice that was flat and hard. "What d'yu want this time of night? Who are you?"

The man did not at once reply. He was staring into the gaunt, hard-featured face that showed glaringly under the rays of the lamp—at the thin neck, and the pink ribbon that was tied in a bow beneath the turned-down collar of her gown.

"Good-evening, Kittie. Don't you know me? I'm Dave—Dave Colgrove." He laughed, a trifle embarrassed. "Aren't you going to let me in?"

There was a moment's pause, then the woman in the doorway made a strange, high sound in her throat, and the lamp flared as she put her hand suddenly forward. She caught at the edge of the door.

"Why—why, yes—of course, Dave. Come in." Her hand went up to the collar of her dress. "Sure. I—I'm glad to see you." She crouched back against the door, holding it wide, her eyes fixed upon his face. He took a step into the room and stood looking about him.

She turned from closing the door and their eyes met. She laughed a little hysterically.

"'Taint much of a place to come to, Dave, but you're welcome, such as it is. It's not much like our—my old quarters." She stopped suddenly and an unwonted smile grew upon her face. "Seems kinder funny to see you here."

"Yes. That's so, Kit. It's been a long time—twenty years, I guess." He was standing in the center of the room, his coat collar still upturned and the drops of rain glistening on his white mustache and closely trimmed, curly beard. His gaze wandered about the room, from the cheap, scant furniture and worn rag carpet on the floor to the few prints tacked up on the walls, until it rested upon a picture that stood on the mantle-shelf over the fireplace. He stared at it long and closely.

It was a large oil portrait in a heavy, tarnished gold frame, looking strangely out of place with the other furnishings. It was the likeness of a man taken in the prime of life, of bold, confident demeanor, and dressed in the height of the fashion of twenty years ago. A pair of cool, steady blue eyes looked out from under a smooth brow, surmounted by a high mass of curling brown hair—the portrait of a man whose world was going just about to his liking. The man gaz-

ing at the picture turned with an easy, amused laugh, and passed his hand over his head of thick, waving, silver hair and on down to stroke his beard.

"I used to be quite a blood in those days, Kit," he said, and looked after her with the same bright, clear blue eyes that were yet undaunted, as she moved to place the lamp on the crocheted mat in the center of the table. Her shawl had slipped from her shoulders and a bit of color showed in her faded cheeks. She turned to meet his gaze that was taking in every detail of her person. The woman in her saw his mind as an open book and she flushed again.

"That was a long time ago, Dave," she reminded him, and stopped. "Have a cheer." She pushed a worn plush rocker toward him. "It's a mighty poor thing to offer you," she apologized," but I reckon it'll have to do. There was a time once when my rooms was furnished sorter different, back in the old Golden Eagle days, when things was coming our way."

"Yes, yes, that's so, Kit," he rejoined, hastily. He seated himself in the rocker and put his hat on the floor beside him where it shone wet in the lamplight, and turned down the collar of his coat. "Those were flush times and we had things about the way we wanted them," then dropping his voice suddenly, "not but what you're fixed comfortable enough here," glancing about the room, avoiding her gaze.

He cleared his throat.

"You er—who provides this place for you? Did—is it your own?"

"*He* gave it to me." Her voice was small and cringing. Then plucking up courage, "I—Jim treated me square, always. Nothing was too good for me while it lasted, and he gave me this place in the end. He looked after me, too, for a while. Whenever I needed it bad I could always get some money up at the bank. Them was his orders. But he's married now and has a family—they don't live here any more. He done well. The woman he married wasn't anything extra smart but she was straight all right, and she's made him a good wife. He's got to be a mighty rich man now and they say he's goin' to be United States Senator."

The one in the rocking-chair laughed grimly.

"So I've heard. He was always lucky ever since he was a boy. Everything Jim Toland touched turned to gold and he held onto it. With me it used to come in bunches but it went just as fast and finally it quit coming. Do you know what I've been doing last?"

"No, I never 've heard a word from you in these twenty years."

"Well, I've been cooking over in a mine on the American River

for forty dollars a month and my grub." He spoke without malice and the blue eyes looked straight out at her, amused.

She stared back at him without speaking, her glance encompassing every detail of his appearance, from his wet, shabby coat down to the rain-soaked boots and the felt hat, limp with age and moisture, that lay on the floor beside him. The man moved uneasily under her scrutiny and gave a conscious laugh.

"I guess both of our circumstances have changed some since the Golden Eagle days," he agreed. "You remember, Kit, when I used to own both the big stage lines to You Bet and Red Dog, and over to Lowell Hill; when I've stood a hundred and fifty head of horses in the old Fashion Stables and taken in a thousand dollars cash in one day? That was living! Why, Kit, we've spent more on one dinner than I earn now for a month's work. Do you remember?"

"Yes, Dave."

They were both silent for a minute, each regarding the other with that calm, unoffending interest that comes with years. He was the first to speak. He cleared his throat again with something of an effort and looked down at the floor.

"I heard you've been having hard luck—that you've been sick."

"Yes—I was, a while back. I reckon I'm all right now."

"That's what I came to see you about. I hate to think of you being up against it and having to go without anything, especially when you're sick."

"Old Doc Hammond always let me have medicine from the drug store when I needed it, but he's gone now. A new man has it."

"Yes. So I heard. I—it looks as if we were going to have a hard winter this year—snow's going to come early, and we're getting along to where we feel the cold more'n we used to." He hesitated, moving his hands nervously.

"I—er, can't do very much for you, Kit—not what I'd like to, but I've been up to the drug store and fixed it with the new man so's you can get whatever you need, and it'll be all right. I just wanted to be sure you wouldn't have to go without medicines and things." He waited a minute. She did not speak.

"I'd like to do something more substantial, Kit," with a curious shade of embarrassment, "but that's about my limit." He stopped short, looking at her appealing. "It isn't much of a limit, is it?"

"Thanks, Dave." Her voice was shaky, and a light that had been gone from them for years burned in the faded eyes. "You're not bounden to do anything for me now. You and me was never married, and it was me that left you. You—you," her glance swept over him

again. "I reckon you need all you've got without me." She got up suddenly and walked across the room to a small, cloth-covered box that stood in the corner. She raised the lid, drew out a bundle, and advanced toward him. A strong odor of lavender filled the room.

"Here are some heavy flannels of yours, Dave. They're kinder old but they're warm. I been a-fixin' them over at odd times when —when I didn't have anything else to do and they're all in good shape." She passed a stiffened hand over the soft, gray woolens. "You never had any but the best in them days and I kept the moths out. There's three suits of them and they'd oughter last you through the winter. Be sure and change if one gets wet—you always was turrible careless about takin' cold. I'll wrap thm up for you."

She stepped over to a cardboard rack that hung on the wall, took from it a folded newspaper and spread it out upon the table and rolled the bundle tight.

"Thank you, Kit," he said gravely and gently, as he took the package from her hands and reached down for his hat. "I guess I'll have to be going now." He rose from his chair, coughed resolutely and turned toward the door. "I'm mighty glad to've seen you again just for the sake of old times—brings back the days of my youth. I guess it'll be about the last talk we'll have, too. Neither of us are as young as we once were, and I'm going 'below' now to stay. My brother wants me to come down and live with him."

"I'm glad, Dave," she said quickly. "I'll feel a lot more comfortable about you to know you've got some one to look out for you. Has he got a wife?"

"Sure, he has, as fine a little woman as you've ever seen, and kids too, a boy and a girl." His eyes glistened. "They're the greatest pair of little tykes in the country. The boy's named after me."

She was watching his face with a hungry look in her eyes.

"And you—you ain't never married?" she questioned, her breath stilled while she waited his answer.

"No. I've always gone it alone, Kit." His eyes were smiling. "I came pretty near it once, a good many years ago and maybe, if I'd—well, there's no use talking about it now. Something happened that sort of changed things a good deal just then and I've never gotten around to it since. Kind of got out of the notion, I guess." He was staring down at the floor, his eyes kept sedulously from hers, then after a pause,— "I'm glad Jim Toland did the right thing by you. He'd ought to've. I thought once, maybe he'd marry you."

He stood for a moment shifting his hat between his hands. Suddenly he gave an odd little laugh and looked up into her face. "Do